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The Atlantic

ABORTION, MORALITY, AND FEMINISM / BERNARD KNOX ON IMPERIAL ROME

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THE AD

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the movies

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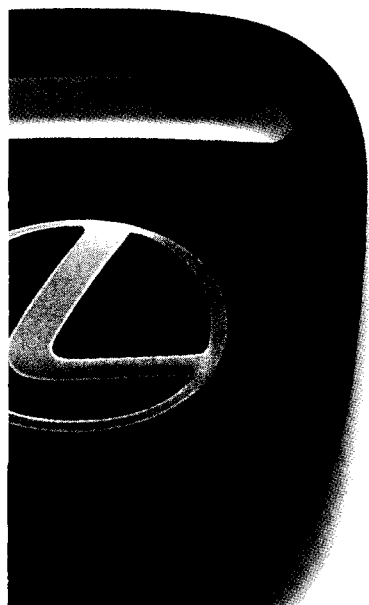

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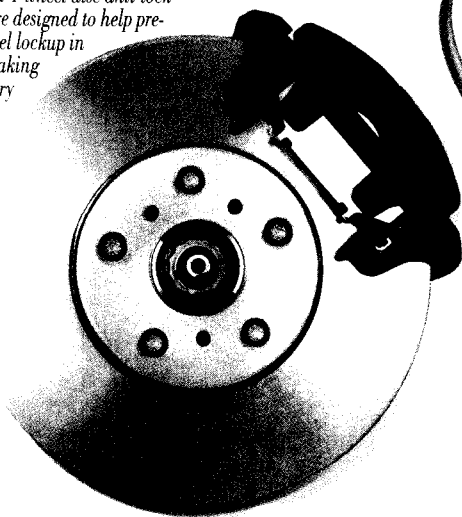


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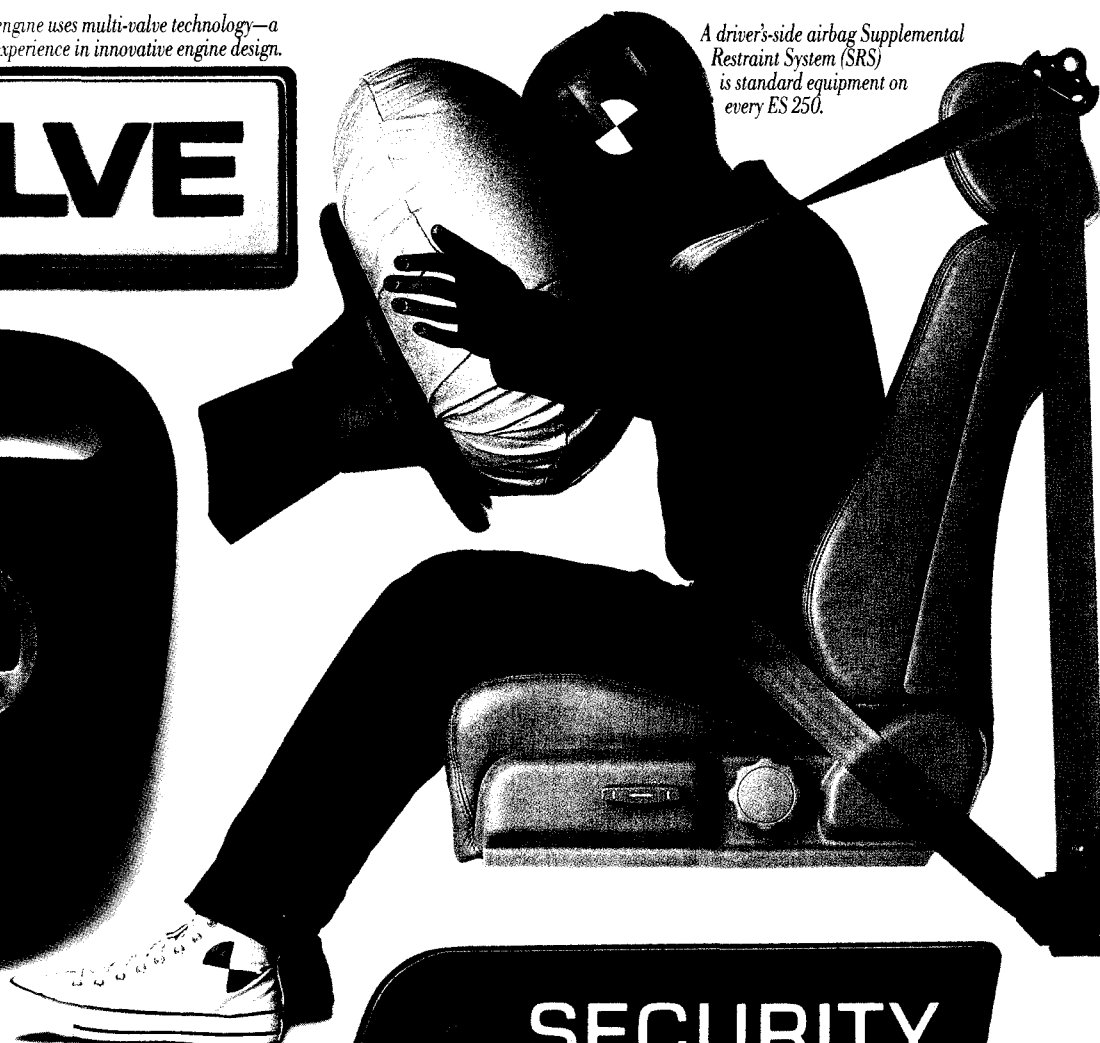
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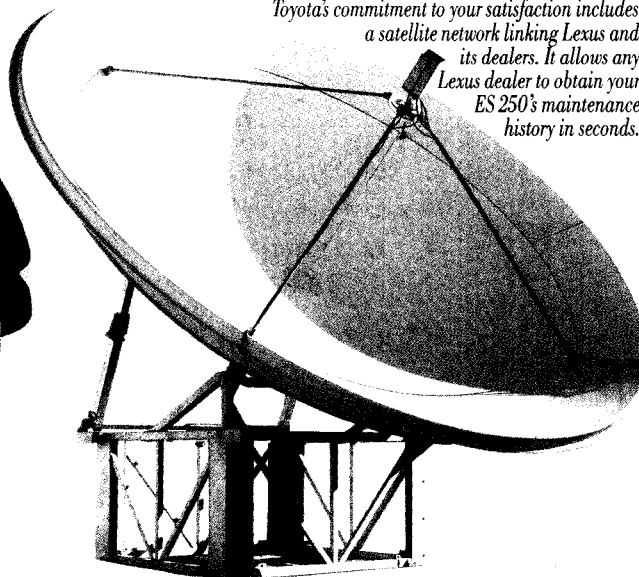


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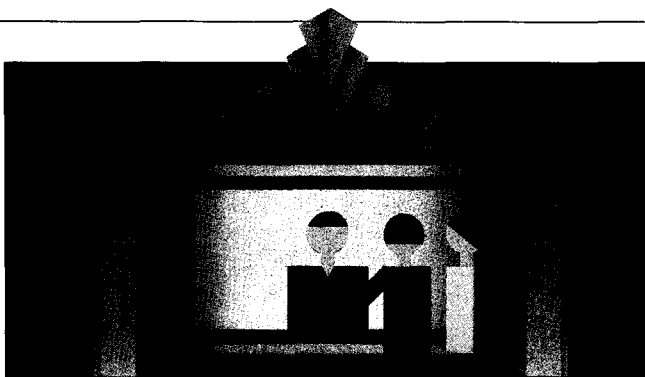
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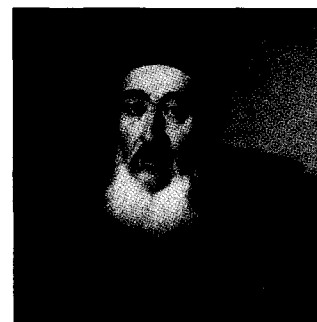




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Going to the movies, the author says, "has become about as memorable as going to the airport." In an iconoclastic essay he lays the blame in large measure on television advertising, whose techniques and, above all, whose cartoon-like view of life are coming to dominate moviemaking. It is "as if the major film schools were teaching not, say, the best movies out of Warner Brothers but the latest campaign by the Saatchi brothers."

by MARK CRISPIN MILLER

78 A MORAL CHOICE / FEMINISM AND ABORTION

A novelist and a social critic address one of the most divisive issues in America. The decision to have an abortion can be an utterly moral one, Mary Gordon writes. Pro-choice arguments, Martha Bayles contends, reflect the hypocrisies and contradictions of modern feminism.

by MARY GORDON / *by* MARTHA BAYLES



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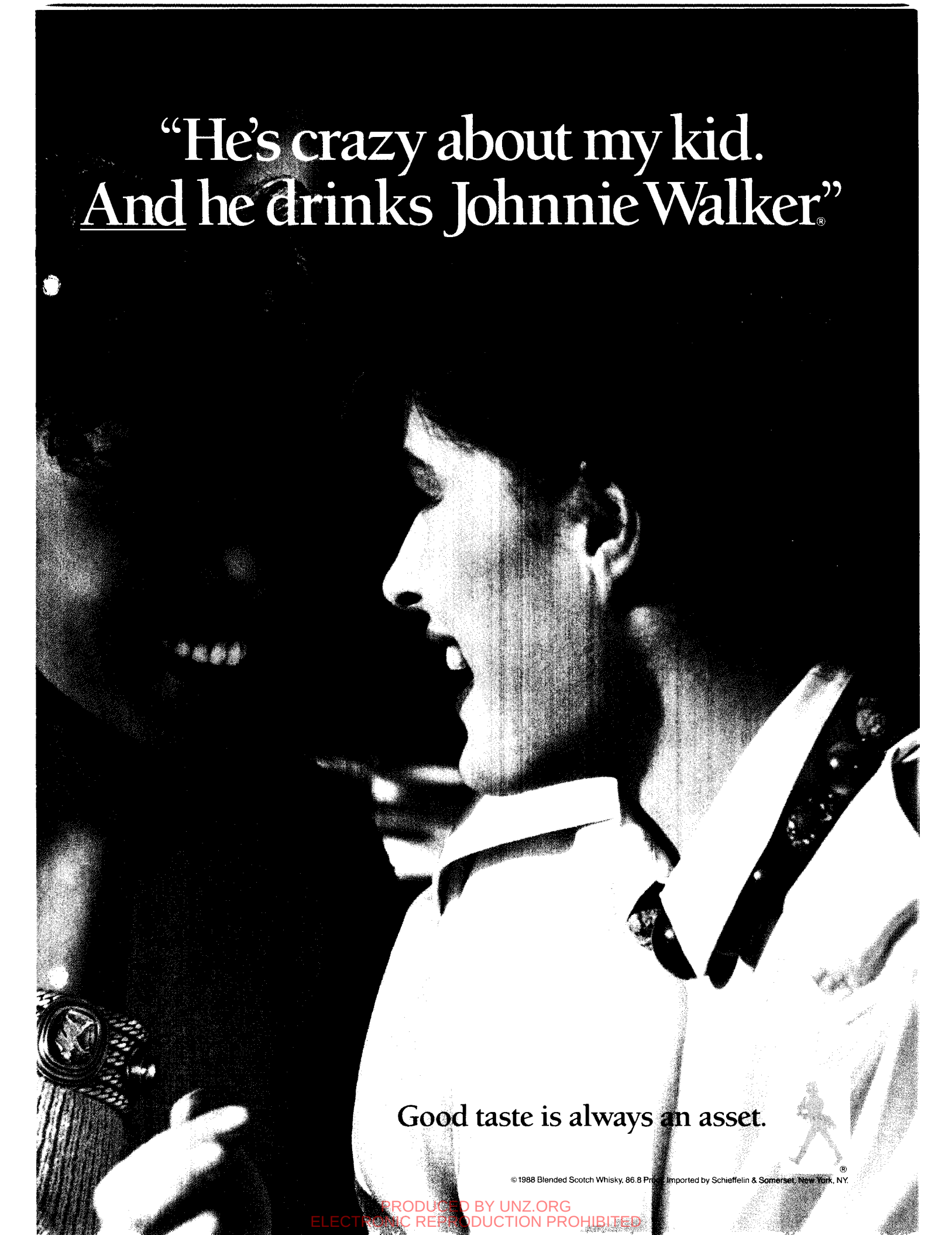
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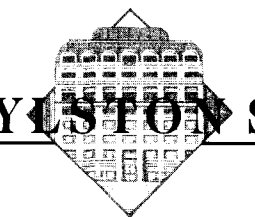
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745 BOYLSTON STREET



READERS MAY HAVE noticed that *The Atlantic Monthly* pays a good deal of attention to the ancient world. This is partly because Greece and Rome are there—or, rather, everywhere: in our political ideas, our language, and our literature, in our nostalgias, and in our dreads (in premonitions of “decline and fall,” for example). Another reason we run book reviews and essays on the ancients is that doing so lets us enlist the considerable talents of Bernard Knox, the former director of the Harvard Center for Hellenic Studies, in Washington—the mecca, to speak ecumenically, of postgraduate classical research in America. In his recently published (and PEN award-winning) book *Essays Ancient and Modern*, Knox remarks on the perennial relevance of the classics when, looking back over a lifetime of immersion in the ancient civilizations, he writes that he often feels like “the man in Lewis Carroll’s poem who ‘thought he saw a rattlesnake, / that questioned him in Greek. / He looked again and found it was / The Middle of Next Week.’”

Knox is referring to the tragic vision of the ancient writers: their “imagination of disaster,” in Henry James’s phrase. He is a man who has seen his share of this century’s disasters.



Bernard Knox

Upon graduating from St. John’s College, Cambridge, Knox enlisted in the International Brigades to fight fascism in Spain. He arrived in time to help repel the assault of Franco’s Moors on Madrid, in November of 1936, and was wounded in the neck and shoulder. After immigrating to America (drawn by his wife-to-be, the novelist Bianca Van Orden), Knox was drafted for the duration of the Second World War. He had a “good war,” serving as an OSS operative first in Brittany, where he led a band of French Maquis in raids behind German lines, and then in Italy, where he headed up a large detachment of Italian partisans. Ambushed in an Italian village, he sought refuge in a pile of rubble and found there his life’s work, in the shape of a volume of Virgil’s *Georgics*. Acting on an old superstition about Virgil’s prophetic powers, he opened the book and stabbed his finger at random. “The plow is despised and rejected,” went the uncannily relevant lines. “The curving sickles are beaten straight to make swords. . . . the vicious war-god rages the world over.” On the spot he made a vow: “If I ever get out of this, I’m going back to the classics and study them seriously.” And he lived to keep it.

—THE EDITORS

CONTRIBUTORS

MARK CRISPIN MILLER (“Hollywood: The Ad”) teaches at Johns Hopkins University, where he heads the media studies program. He is the author of *Boxed In: The Culture of TV* (1988). Miller’s article in this issue will be included in a collection of essays, *Seeing Through Movies*, to be published in June by Pantheon.

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The April Almanac was compiled with the assistance of Gail Cleere, on behalf of the U.S. Naval Observatory; Ted Moncreiff; the U.S. Bureau of the Census; The Wilderness Society; and the National Wetlands Inventory Project.



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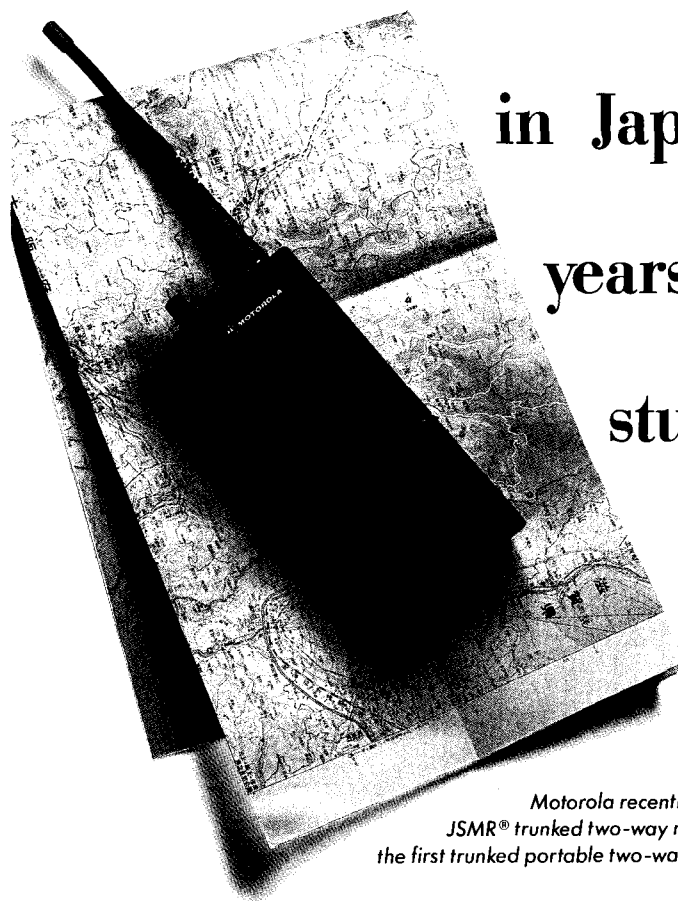
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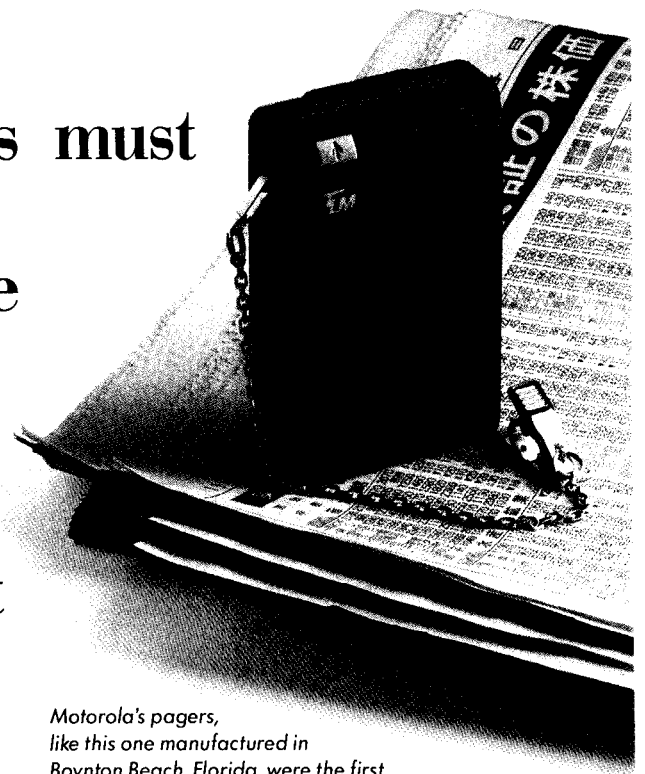
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



A MAN WITH ANSWERS

Thank you for Charles C. Mann's important article about what Lester Thurow is trying to do ("The Man With All the Answers," January *Atlantic*). I hope Professor Thurow will stick to his guns until he has done all one man can to prepare American business and industry for the 1990s and the fiercest competition the world has ever known.

Thurow's meat-ax solutions (\$1.50 tax on gasoline, high school exam for college qualification, and so forth) are not the least bit outrageous. In fact, anyone who has ever tried to restructure and revitalize a major government or industry organization knows that these are the only solutions that have a chance. Huge bureaucracies simply do not respond to gentle nudges. They absorb punches and carry on as before.

So much is right about Professor Thurow's thinking that I am reluctant to criticize it. However, if he, rather than the author, is speaking on page 60—"The 1989 deficit is not], in the context of the entire U.S. economy, a lot of money"—I must disagree. This is the infuriating GNP argument. It is true that the U.S. economy is churning out \$4 trillion to \$5 trillion in goods and services. It is true that such a powerful economy produces more taxes than would come from a lower GNP. It is also true that this still is not enough to pay Congress's bills. Unfortunately, these are the only connections between GNP and government deficits. Theoretically, with such a strong GNP, we should be able and willing to pay much more in taxes, and if that were so, then the GNP argument would be valid. It is not valid because citizens of the United States have no confidence whatsoever that Congress would spend additional tax dollars wisely, and will not give it any more without one hell of a fight.

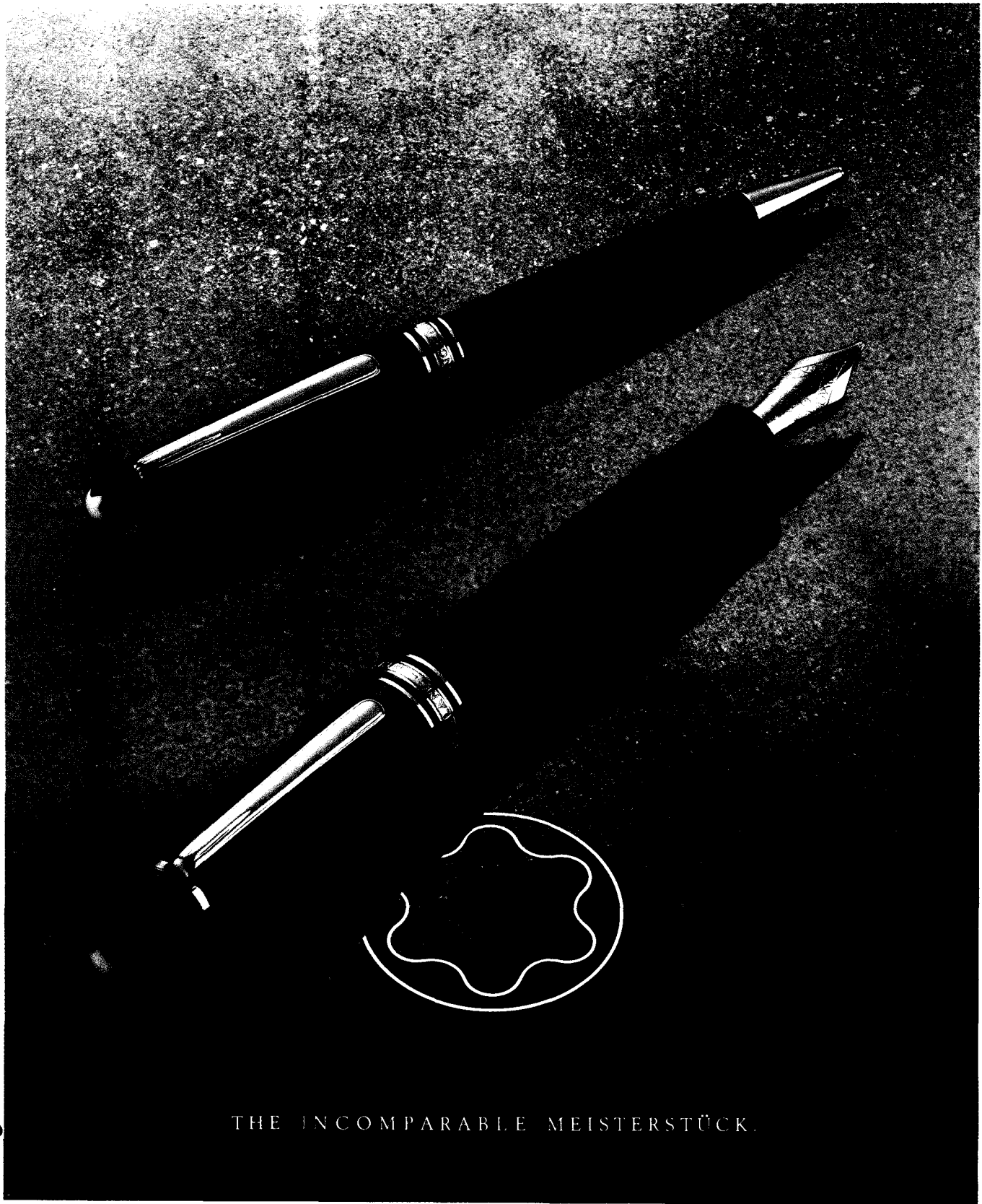
JOHN T. CARLEY
Shalimar, Fla.

I have to take exception to Lester Thurow's out-of-hand dismissal of the role of services in U.S. economic growth and especially to the place of services in balance of payments. Charles Mann writes, "No country, he argues, has yet succeeded in exporting services; consequently, locking the country into services is equivalent to locking it into permanent trade deficits."

This statement is patently untrue. The case of Britain at the end of the last century immediately comes to mind. By the end of the 1880s Britain's manufacturing hegemony was at an end. Thereafter Britain had large manufacturing deficits, owing to an increase in protectionism globally and the growing manufacturing strength of both traditional competitors (principally Germany) and new competitors (the United States). However, for the forty or so years until the First World War, British dominance in services, especially shipping and financial services, combined with returns from foreign investment, gave Britain both prosperity and large balance-of-payments surpluses.

JEFFREY HAWKINS
School of International Relations
University of Southern California
Los Angeles

I was surprised that Lester Thurow's message neglects to mention the irreparable damage that has been done to our economy by Ronald Reagan's skewing of our manufacturing base in favor of the defense industry. Our government's subsidizing of the so-called defense buildup, which was in fact the buildup of a war potential, funneled thousands of billions of taxpayers' dollars into a few specialized industries and neglected to offer any support to a wide spectrum of manufacturing industries that needed help. The government salvaged the Chrysler Corporation but permitted many other parts of our manufacturing base simply to collapse.



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In addition, the federal government monopolized the best talent for research and development, leaving our major industries bereft of the personnel that could have upgraded our products for export.

Our defense budget has become a sacred cow that Congress is reluctant to attack even though the rationale for a strong defense has evaporated. We should be planning for conversion of wartime manufacturing into consumer products, as they have done in Britain. This would increase our manufacturing base, as Thurow insists we must, without the threat of major unemployment. Only then would we be more economically competitive in the world.

JOHANNA FISHER
Long Beach, Calif.

Suggesting, as he does, that the service sector consists entirely of doctors and lawyers, Lester Thurow greatly underestimates this vital and growing segment of the U.S. economy. The service sector also consists of computer programmers, copywriters, architects, engineers, management consultants,

movie producers, airline pilots, and, yes, even college professors. Thurow himself is in the service economy.

Nowadays the Koreans may be making Pontiacs. But Americans are still designing them, advertising them, distributing them, and selling them. If America successfully develops an economic structure based primarily on providing information and services, we will have moved up, not down, on the international economic food chain.

RICHARD ARMSTRONG
New York, N.Y.

The trouble with economists is, few of them (if any) have ever worked on farms or factories. If they had, they might understand why so many Americans are willing to let Mexicans or Koreans or Sri Lankans do it. I grew up in a factory town, and I'd never want to go back to the life—frustrated fathers coming home and whacking their kids, ugly industrial sprawl along the river. Who wants that? Let the Koreans have it. Maybe they can do it better.

PAM JOHNSON
New York, N.Y.

Hooray for Lester Thurow. How nice to hear—for a change—that it's *not* all right that our manufacturing base has disappeared from under us. The nonsense that "we have advanced into a service economy" is a shabby rationalization for our devastated industrial base. Now, how to regain it?

What's wrong with the following scenario: Announce that foreigners may no longer use American dollars to buy American factories, farms, stocks, and so forth, but only to buy American products. That being the case, of course, they would demand more dollars for their products. This, in turn, would raise the prices of foreign goods and permit American manufacturers to compete once again.

As our products improved and foreigners paid more for them, our dollars would become more valuable, dropping the price of imports again. The system would thus be self-adjusting. It seems so simple that I'm sure an economist would have considered it first. Where's the flaw?

JAY M. DAVIS, M.D., Ph.D.
Arcata, Calif.

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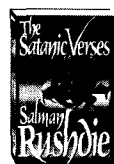
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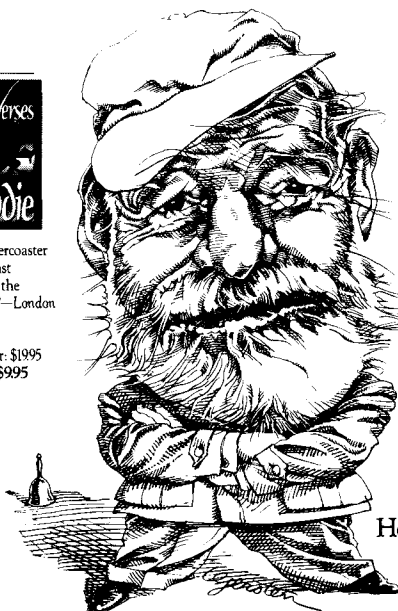
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The problem in the United States is the giving away of money (welfare, Social Security, food stamps, Medicaid and Medicare, farm subsidies, military pensions, and so forth), which leads to budget deficits, which leads to trade deficits, which leads to high U.S. interest rates, leading to a decrease in the U.S. living standard, which leads to trade wars and the eventual disintegration of the U.S. dollar, leading to a depression and, most likely, a nuclear Third World War.

The sociobiological results of giving away this money are illegitimate sex, the breakdown of the family unit, the increased divorce rate, increased illegitimacy, increased drug and alcohol use, increased crime, the breakdown in education, the loss of jobs to foreign competitors, a lowered living standard, overpopulation, all leading once again to the Third World War.

LUDWIG VAN LUDVIG
Hanover, N.H.

Charles Mann replies:

John Carley and I are in agreement. I brought up the GNP simply to point

out that the size of the deficit matters less than what the money is used for, and whether it absorbs too much of the savings pool.

Jeffrey Hawkins is right: the English did live on services for a long time. But those services—long-distance shipping, for example—are not important parts of the current service economy, which runs heavily to things like unisex barbershops, tanning salons, and drive-in channeling centers. And after the First World War, moreover, Britain discovered to its cost that manufacturing matters.

To Johanna Fisher: A single article can't include *everything*. Thurow would agree that beating our swords into plowshares is important; I think he would hope that the damage is not, as you say, "irreparable."

Richard Armstrong and Pam Johnson deliver paens to our freedom from the industrial sector. For most people, however, the alternative to a factory job is not a carpeted office but the hot steamy kitchen of a fast-food joint.

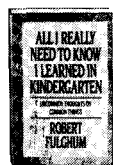
Unfortunately, Dr. Davis, the Japanese are not just buying American

farms and factories. They are buying Treasury bonds (more than a third of the February auction), which makes it possible to keep the government going while the American public refuses to cut spending or raise taxes. If we tell them they can't buy U.S. land, they may say they won't buy U.S. bonds—and then we'd really be in a fix.

ARMY WAR COLLEGE

I am amazed that an article that criticizes the Army War College for being out-of-date ("The Military: Conventional Warfare," January *Atlantic*) is so out-of-date itself. Michael Massing did his research and interviews in the summer of 1988; I spent the fall of 1989 at the war college, where I was a faculty member of Seminar 10, the one he attended.

His basic complaint, that the army is teaching its future generals how to fight a conventional war in Europe while ignoring low-intensity conflicts, is simply no longer true. Nor is it true that the students concentrate on the



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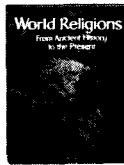
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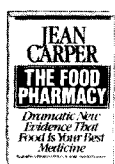


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Second World War while ignoring Vietnam. This was frustrating to me, as I am a student of the Second World War and not of Vietnam, but was undoubtedly good for the students.

Massing writes that contemporary officers must know as much about agrarian reform and deforestation as about tank maneuvers. I can assure him that in our discussions, which were extended, about Central America, social problems and the resulting political difficulties received nearly all the attention.

As to Vietnam, the readings and the discussions centered on My Lai (Lieutenant William Calley was roundly denounced by the officers, nearly every one of whom had served in a similar capacity in Vietnam), the absence of leadership (American as well as Vietnamese), politics, the causes and the effects of the peace movement at home, and the role of the press. These are precisely the kind of issues Massing wants our next generation of generals to consider. So do I. The point is, it is being done.

STEPHEN E. AMBROSE
University of New Orleans
New Orleans, La.

With considerable interest but with a measure of skepticism I have read Michael Massing's brief critical essay on the curriculum and doctrine prevailing at the U.S. Army War College. Both feelings were aroused in me by my having served on special assignment from the University of Kentucky during 1981 and 1982 as the Harold Keith Johnson Visiting Professor of Military History at the U.S. Army Military History Institute and the Army War College. I collaborated in directing one of the seminars like those described by Massing.

One of his points, perhaps his major point, is that the war college neglects the Vietnam War and its lessons. He concludes by saying, "Until our senior officers come to terms with the last war, they will not be prepared to fight the next one."

I do not know what is now being taught or discussed at the war college. But I feel obligated to say that the Vietnam War was freely discussed during the year I was there, and that these discussions were insightful and critical. Colonel Harry Summers, whose book *On Strategy* (1982) is favorably men-

tioned by Massing, was then on the war-college staff, and his views were widely circulated and well known. A special course on the Vietnam War was taught that year, and I am reasonably sure he was the instructor for it. The contents of George Herring's informed and critical study of the Vietnam War, *America's Longest War* (1979), were also aired at the war college, and Professor Herring was brought there to lecture on the subject.

Finally, during the summer of 1982 a military-history symposium on the theme "The Impact of Unsuccessful Military Campaigns on Military Institutions, 1860-1980" occurred at the war college under the sponsorship of the war college, the U.S. Army Center of Military History, and the Military History Institute. The American experience in Vietnam was the reason for the adoption of the theme. Distinguished military historians from Denmark, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, West Germany, and the United States delivered addresses. They presented a great variety of instances of defeat in war, and of responses to defeat. The last session, which was also the climactic session thematically, was on the Vietnam War, with Colonel Summers as a major participant.

Has the war college done an about-face in its policy of encouraging and sponsoring open and critical study of the Vietnam War as well as other wars? Or did Massing miss something in his visit to the school?

CHARLES P. ROLAND
University of Kentucky
Lexington, Ky.

In his excellent article "Conventional Warfare," Michael Massing states that students at the war college "learn how Douglas MacArthur island-hopped across the Pacific."

This distinction belongs to Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz. Beginning at Tarawa, in the Gilbert Islands, his Navy, Marine, Army, and Air Force units captured Kwajalein, Saipan, Guam, and Iwo Jima, from which atomic bombing ended the war.

MacArthur remained headquartered in Australia until October of 1944, when his and Nimitz's forces landed at Leyte in the first step toward the recapture of the Philippines.

WILLIAM EWING
Jackson, Miss.

Michael Massing would like the Army War College to teach its students to become soldier-statesmen, not mere soldiers. He attributes this to the "primary lesson of Clausewitz," that "until senior officers understand the social roots of military conflict, they cannot hope to resolve it."

Certainly Clausewitz taught that war was politics by other means, but this does not imply that he thought the primary role of officers was to *resolve* conflict. As a true Prussian militarist, he much preferred that they *win* conflict, and devoted hundreds of pages to telling them how to do just that.

STEPHEN CUNLIFFE
La Cañada, Calif.

Michael Massing replies:

The war college has certainly made some strides in teaching unconventional warfare, but it still has a long way to go. The Vietnam War is a good example. The war surfaces periodically in conjunction with other subjects—for example, My Lai is discussed in the context of wartime ethics—but in the core curriculum the Vietnam War itself is relegated to a single case study lasting two days. Professor Ambrose evidently finds this sufficient, but I think one could spend two months on the subject and barely skim the surface. The notion that the college lags in teaching low-intensity conflict is not just my own view—it was put to me by several faculty members and the school's commanding officer himself, whom my article quotes as saying, "The war college is not yet where it should be on low-intensity conflict."

The school does seem to be devoting less time to Vietnam than it was when Professor Roland was there. Colonel Summers taught at the war college from 1979 to 1985 and during those years served as a catalyst for discussion of the Vietnam War. Based on my interviews, it seems that since his departure no one has devoted himself to the subject with quite the same energy.

Students at the college study both General MacArthur's Australia-based Pacific campaign and Admiral Nimitz's Pacific island operations. I should not have conflated the two, and I thank William Ewing for pointing out the distinction.

It is of course true, as Stephen Cunliffe points out, that Clausewitz want-

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Fahrvergnügen Word List

Almanac	Precision
April	Quickness
Autobahn	Responsive
Control	Rock
Europe	Rome
Exhilaration	Roomy
Fallows	Satisfaction
Family Car	Security
Freedom	Summer
Hollywood	Tokyo
Humor	Venice
Maneuvering	Volkswagen
Music	Word
Passat	

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ed generals to win wars. In noting the importance of the social roots of military conflict, I was drawing my own lessons from Clausewitz's writings.

GREY OWL

Kenneth Brower's article "Grey Owl" (January *Atlantic*) was intriguing, if not spellbinding. However, the author shocked this reader when he wrote that Grey Owl belongs "in the pantheon" "with Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Aldo Leopold, and Rachel Carson." While Grey Owl might have been a colorful and fascinating figure, it was only during the last ten years of his life (1928–1938) that he devoted himself to his beaver-reintroduction program. Aside from this work, the article mentions only Grey Owl's writings and lecture tours during the same period. While his legacy stamps him as a major contributor to environmental causes, the author provides insufficient data to support the inclusion of Grey Owl "in the pantheon."

GEORGE NEWMAN
Tucson, Ariz.

Kenneth Brower replies:

In my article I anticipated George Newman's objection, actually, and appended a qualifying phrase. I wrote that Grey Owl belonged in the pantheon with Thoreau, Muir, Leopold, and Carson, "or perhaps . . . on the level just below." But as a test for Mr. Newman, I'll ask: If Grey Owl does not belong in the pantheon, quick, name another Canadian who does. An Australian who belongs? An Englishman? A German? Other lands have environmental heroes too. One of my small points in the story had to do with American introversion in these matters.

RESTLESS CHILDREN

Alfie Kohn's article on hyperactivity, "Suffer the Restless Children" (November *Atlantic*), dismisses the importance of diet, using information that is more than a decade old and has been found to be inaccurate. In referring to the Feingold diet, which removes certain food additives and salicylates, the author states, "(Subsequent studies have been unable to demonstrate that

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diet can bring about any significant improvement in the great majority of hyperactive children.)”

In 1982 the National Institutes of Health evaluated the early studies and found that they were seriously flawed. Thus the NIH scientific panel concluded that there actually had never been a controlled study of the Feingold diet.

In 1985 *Lancet* published the results of a double-blind study by Egger et al., who found that 79 percent of the hyperactive children reacted to the dye and preservative tested.

The January, 1989, issue of *Pediatrics* published the results of the double-blind study by Kaplan et al. at the University of Calgary/Alberta Children's Hospital. Using a diet similar to that recommended by Feingold, the researchers found that 58 percent of the hyperactive children responded.

It is difficult to understand how comprehensive research on the issue of hyperactivity could possibly have missed these significant data from such authoritative sources.

JANE HERSEY
Executive Director
The Feingold Association
of the United States
Alexandria, Va.

Yet again, parents are asked to suffer through a misleading discussion of childhood hyperactivity and its treatment with Ritalin. Alfie Kohn tries to present the pros and cons but instead adds unnecessary anxieties and confusion to an issue already muddled with widespread misconceptions.

It is true that we currently lack a definitive biological marker for the disorder, that estimates of prevalence vary, and that any set of diagnostic criteria may be, to some degree, arbitrary. It is also true that children who have an “attention deficit” or seem to be “hyperactive” are a mixed bag, including a few whose problems are primarily caused by conditions at home, improper classroom placement, bad teachers, or emotional problems. Some children have specific learning disabilities, depression, or conduct disorders, often *in addition to* an attention-deficit disorder. Some, to be sure, need nondrug treatments such as special education, behavior modification, or even psychotherapy aimed at the source of their problems.

Kohn's assertion that biological (that is, non-environmental) factors at best account for “some tiny subset of those children called hyperactive” is not a view shared by any expert that I know.

The important questions are these: First, does Ritalin (or any other stimulant drug) dramatically benefit most children with attention deficits (with or without hyperactivity) with no significant side effects? Second, do the benefits of medication outweigh the risks, for properly chosen candidates? The answer to both questions is yes, emphatically. Does the use of medication preclude other kinds of treatment? Of course not.

The practical point that Kohn largely overlooks is that *favorable responders* to Ritalin can usually be identified within a day or two, at most within a week or two. Parents should understand that Ritalin is short-acting and does not accumulate from day to day. If an adverse response occurs, it will be short-lived, and the medication ought to be adjusted or discontinued altogether. Favorable responders do not appear drugged or unnatural in any way. They do appear more alert and focused, more “on-task,” more cooperative, and less aggressive.

Kohn also fails to mention that treatment of hyperactivity with Ritalin does not increase the risk of later drug abuse. To the contrary, those treated with medication are *less likely* to develop problems with substance abuse and delinquency. Hyperactive children never become addicted to Ritalin.

A therapeutic trial of medication, properly monitored by parents, teachers, and the physician, is safe and appropriate for the majority of children suspected of having an attention-deficit disorder. The genuine and often striking benefits of medication ought not to be denied to those who need it and who may show major improvements in their ability to think, act, and interact. The restless children suffer enough already.

ERIC D. SASLOW, M.D.
UCLA School of Medicine
Los Angeles, Calif.

Alfie Kohn replies:

There is a curious symmetry between those who discern a medical conspiracy to turn our children into drug addicts and those who, like Eric Saslow, refuse to hear a discouraging

word about feeding amphetamines to children in order to make them more manageable. My reading of the research led me to a position somewhere between these two extremes.

The evidence shows that Ritalin produces what parents and teachers consider to be a beneficial effect on some children; that often placebos do too; and that even though drugs don't address underlying social and emotional problems, they are often used in lieu of any other treatment. A reliance on Ritalin also creates the impression that unusually active children are suffering from a biological disease (a view unsupported by any research I know of) and reinforces the questionable belief that the problem resides inside a child rather than in the child's interaction with particular environments.

Another way of ignoring how children are raised and taught is to suggest that the trouble is with their diet. As far as I know, the late Dr. Benjamin Feingold conducted not a single controlled study to support his claims. Subsequent research—notably that which is neither a decade old nor “found to be inaccurate”—does not support the idea that eliminating sugar or food additives is likely to alter most children's behavior.

Whereas Jane Hersey selects the two studies most congenial to her point of view, a 1986 review of all the methodologically sound research available (published in *Development and Behavioral Pediatrics*) found that of 240 children whose diets were altered to remove food additives, “at most, only 2 or 3” showed any improvement as a result. Other researchers, such as Richard Milich, have experimented with sugar-free diets and have come up empty-handed.

In fact, even the studies cited by Hersey are not very convincing: both were conducted with children who had a variety of allergies and other physical symptoms and “were therefore probably not typical of overactive children in the general population,” in the words of the *Lancet* researchers. The *Pediatrics* study, limited to twenty-four preschool-aged boys, found that “only half of the children who completed the study exhibited behavioral improvement, and it is safe to say that not a single parent believed that participation in this study had transformed their child into an easy to manage person.”



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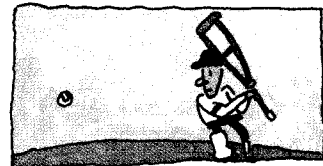
Q & A

As the earth travels through space, at 67,000 miles per hour, does it leave anything behind?

Ultraviolet light causes water molecules to break apart, and hydrogen then diffuses out of the earth's atmosphere. An ocean's worth of the element may have been lost during the planet's lifetime. Hydrogen also enters our atmosphere, as a result of solar flares and winds; the net loss or gain is unknown. On balance, our planet is most likely gaining weight, owing to the 50,000–60,000 tons of meteoric debris that land on us every year. Our attempts to even the score are pitiful by comparison. Fewer than 7,000 objects, many of them fragments, are currently in orbit as a result of space missions, and they will eventually fall back to earth.

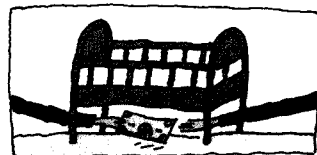
HEALTH & SAFETY

April 2, the baseball season is scheduled to begin. To minimize off-the-field injuries most baseball players these days have contracts with a provision that prohibits them from skiing, racing cars, skydiving, playing football, soccer, or ice hockey, playing professional basketball, or participating in professional boxing or wrestling. The sports-playing provision in contracts is often referred to as the Jim Lonborg clause; it began to appear after Jim Lonborg, of the Boston Red Sox, a Cy Young Award winner, injured his leg in a skiing accident in 1967, and in the process seriously damaged his career.



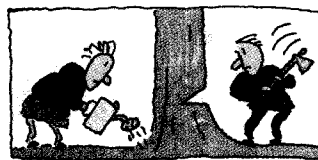
DEMOGRAPHICS

April 1, Census Day. The biggest change this year will be in the way the data are made available to the public. After the 1980 census the public could buy printed reports, reports on microfiche, or computer tapes to be used with a mainframe computer. The 1990 data will be available on CD-ROM compact disks as well. Each such disk (cost: \$125) can hold information equivalent to that on four reels of magnetic tape. To retrieve data from a CD-ROM disk and manipulate it, a user will need a CD-ROM player. The price of a player—\$400 and up—is much lower than what used to be charged for a computer with the same capabilities. The result, one demographer says, will be a further “democratization” of access to demographic data: “The Harvards and Proctor & Gambles have had it for twenty years. Now the local pizza store will have it too.”



GOVERNMENT

April 1, the hourly minimum wage rises from \$3.35 to \$3.80, although employers will be able to pay a “training wage” of \$3.23 if workers are 19 or under and are in a special training program. 6, the House of Representatives goes into recess. 9, the Senate goes into recess. 16, federal income-tax returns are due. Beginning this year parents who claim tax credits for child-care expenses will be required to reveal the name and Social Security number of the child-care provider. The new procedure is designed to curb a rampant form of tax evasion: paying child-care expenses under the table, in cash, to avoid having to pay Social Security, and to enable the child-care provider to avoid reporting the income.

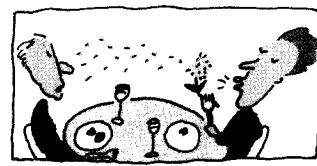


ENVIRONMENT

April 22, Earth Day, and the twentieth anniversary of the first Earth Day. In the past two decades the United States has opted for policies that by and large institutionalize pollution at certain levels rather than eliminate it. The overall record on the environment is mixed. Since 1970 the United States has reduced the lead in its air by 90 percent. It has added 447 species to the list of plants and animals protected under the law, established 121 new national wildlife refuges, and designated 8,410 miles of scenic rivers. But it has also clear-cut more than a million acres of virgin forest, lost 6 million acres of wetlands, and decreased the percentage of federal spending devoted to natural resources and the environment.

FOOD

Dandelions are at their most abundant this month. If a recent trend persists, they will be finding their way onto the tables of more and more restaurants. The dandelion business, which is centered in Vineland, New Jersey, was a major beneficiary of what was perhaps the only significant spiritual quest of the 1980s—the quest for unexpected or fetchingly rustic kinds of salad greens—and during the decade sales of commercially grown dandelions tripled. Calls to three high-priced New York restaurants—Le Cirque, 21, and Lutèce—revealed that all now have dandelions on their menus.



ARTS & LETTERS

April 1, cable television's MTV is to launch *Ha! The TV Comedy Network*. 4, the Bancroft Prizes will be awarded for distinguished books in the field of American history and/or diplomacy. 12, Pulitzer Prizes announced. 23-25, the American Newspaper Publishers Association convenes in Los Angeles. One cause for publishers' concern: the failure of daily-newspaper circulation to keep pace with population growth. One villain, according to several analysts, is a familiar one—“greater competition for people's time”—and is still at large.



THE SKIES

April 1, Daylight Saving Time begins; at 2:00 A.M. clocks should be turned ahead one hour. 9, Full Moon, also known this month as the Egg Moon, the Seed Moon, and the Easter Moon. 21-22, the Lyrid meteor shower peaks tonight in the hours after midnight. 24, New Moon.

25 YEARS AGO

Richard Lowenthal, writing in the April, 1965, issue of *The Atlantic*: “Some of us may anticipate that as the ideological poison is drained out of East-West relations . . . the very need for the Atlantic military alliance in its present form may disappear. Nobody need be shocked at such a thought, for defensive alliances are distinct from economic or political unions precisely in that they have no abiding purpose in themselves. . . . But the history of the Vienna Congress—and of Napoleon's return from Elba—stands as an eloquent warning of what may happen to allies who allow their bond to dissolve before its purpose has been finally achieved.”



A war of nerves,



FDR vs. Stalin.
JFK vs. Khrushchev.
Nixon vs. Brezhnev.
And Reagan vs. Gorbachev.

They faced off
across a chasm
unimaginable in today's
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REPORTS & COMMENT

NOTES

In the Beginning...

Famous first words

JANE RUSSELL LOOKED up at me and said, "Jack, you old thing, you; how have you been?" That is certainly not a graceful assembly of words, but I bet it got your attention. If it did, it discharged one of the duties of a first sentence, which is to ensure that at least one person not related to the writer by blood or marriage will read on to the last sentence.

Recently, to relieve the tedium of packing box after box of books (we were moving), I started to look at the first sentences of the volumes I was handling, and I was not only delighted to stumble on this diverting way to evade work but also surprised at what

you can discover about writing from this narrow, arbitrary, but, for all that, resonant angle of vision.

To begin with, here is my own favorite first sentence. It's from E. M. Forster's short story "The Story of the Siren." "Few things have been more beautiful than my notebook on the Deist Controversy as it fell downward through the waters of the Mediterranean." That sentence not only prefigures the action of the story—rationalist Englishman encounters the supernatural, Italian style—but also sets a tone that can only be called Forsteresque. When critics say that great writers have distinctive "voices," they mean, among other things, that they write first sentences like that one.

This next first sentence has none of the perfection of tone of the Forster, but it, too, is distinctive: "Alexey Fyodorovitch Karamazov was the third son of Fyodor Pavlovitch Karamazov, a landowner well known in our district in his own day, and still remembered among us owing to his gloomy and tragic death, which happened thirteen

years ago, and which I shall describe in its proper place." That is how Dostoevsky began *The Brothers Karamazov*. Here is how he launched *The Devils*: "Before describing the extraordinary events which took place so recently in our town, hitherto not remarkable for anything in particular, I find it necessary, since I am not a skilled writer, to go back a little and begin with certain biographical details concerning our talented and greatly esteemed Stepan Trofimovich Verkhovensky." Neither of those sentences, in these translations, would win a beauty contest, and yet they show what a first sentence can accomplish. Dostoevsky's strategy was to establish a background and a foreground, a sort of visual frame for the immense novels that were to come. The background—the "gloomy and tragic death" of Fyodor Pavlovitch Karamazov, "the extraordinary events which took place so recently in our town"—sets off the action of the foreground, investing it with portent and imparting a velocity of expectation to the whole narrative. That, when you



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stop and think about it, is not a bad day's work for a single sentence.

Henry James called the sort of epic novels written by Tolstoy and Dostoevsky "large loose baggy monsters"; and yet many of James's first sentences cannot stand a comparison with Dostoevsky's: "Under certain circumstances there are few hours in life more agreeable than the hour dedicated to the ceremony known as afternoon tea"—*The Portrait of a Lady*. "Oh yes, I dare say I can find the child, if you would like to see him," Miss Pynsent said; she had a fluttered wish to assent to every suggestion made by her visitor, whom she regarded as a high and rather terrible personage"—*The Princess Casamassima*. "A narrow graveyard in the heart of a bustling, indifferent city, seen from the windows of a gloomy-looking inn, is at no time an object of enlivening suggestion; . . ."—*The Europeans*.

I stop that last specimen at the semicolon as an act of mercy to a great writer; the rest is too clumsily awful to reproduce. Yet correct literary opinion holds James to be the supreme artist in fiction, Dostoevsky the Thomas Wolfe of the steppes. On the evidence of our first sentences, I would say that here is a literary cliché due for revision. Doctoral students take note.

DICKENS WROTE perhaps the world's most famous first sentence in *A Tale of Two Cities*, and that lapidary formulation has since been emulated by all manner of writers. Thus Wilfrid Sheed begins his delicious biography of Clare Boothe Luce this way: "She was the best of dames, she was the worst of dames." Ernie, of Sesame Street, follows suit in a first sentence he reads to Bert: "It was the best of oatmeals, it was the worst of oatmeals." The title of Ernie's book? *A Tale of Two Breakfasts*.

Incidentally, "I am born" is not, as everybody remembers, the first sentence of *David Copperfield*; it is the title of the first chapter. The first sentence—"Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show"—is not nearly so memorable. It seems, though, to have furnished the inspiration for this great first sentence by another writer: "If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably

want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth." The writer is, of course, J. D. Salinger, and that is the beginning of *The Catcher in the Rye*.

It's disappointing to discover that John Cheever began his prizewinning novel *The Wapshot Chronicle* in this flat-footed way: "St. Botolphs was an old place, an old river town." He did ever so much better in his short stories: "In the summer, when the Nudd family gathered at Whitebeach Camp, in the Adirondacks, there was always a night



when one of them would ask, 'Remember the day the pig fell into the well?'"—"The Day the Pig Fell Into the Well." "Our ideas of castles, formed in childhood, are inflexible, and why try to reform them?"—"The Golden Age." "You may have seen my mother waltzing on ice skates in Rockefeller Center"—"The Angel of the Bridge." These sentences do more than open stories; they open worlds. Cheever knew that in a novel he had the time and space to fill in his world touch by touch, but in his stories he was under pressure to score a knockout with his maiden punch. Good as they are, his first sentences don't work as detachable epigrams, like Tolstoy's much-quoted opener from *Anna Karenina*; rather, they are portals that open

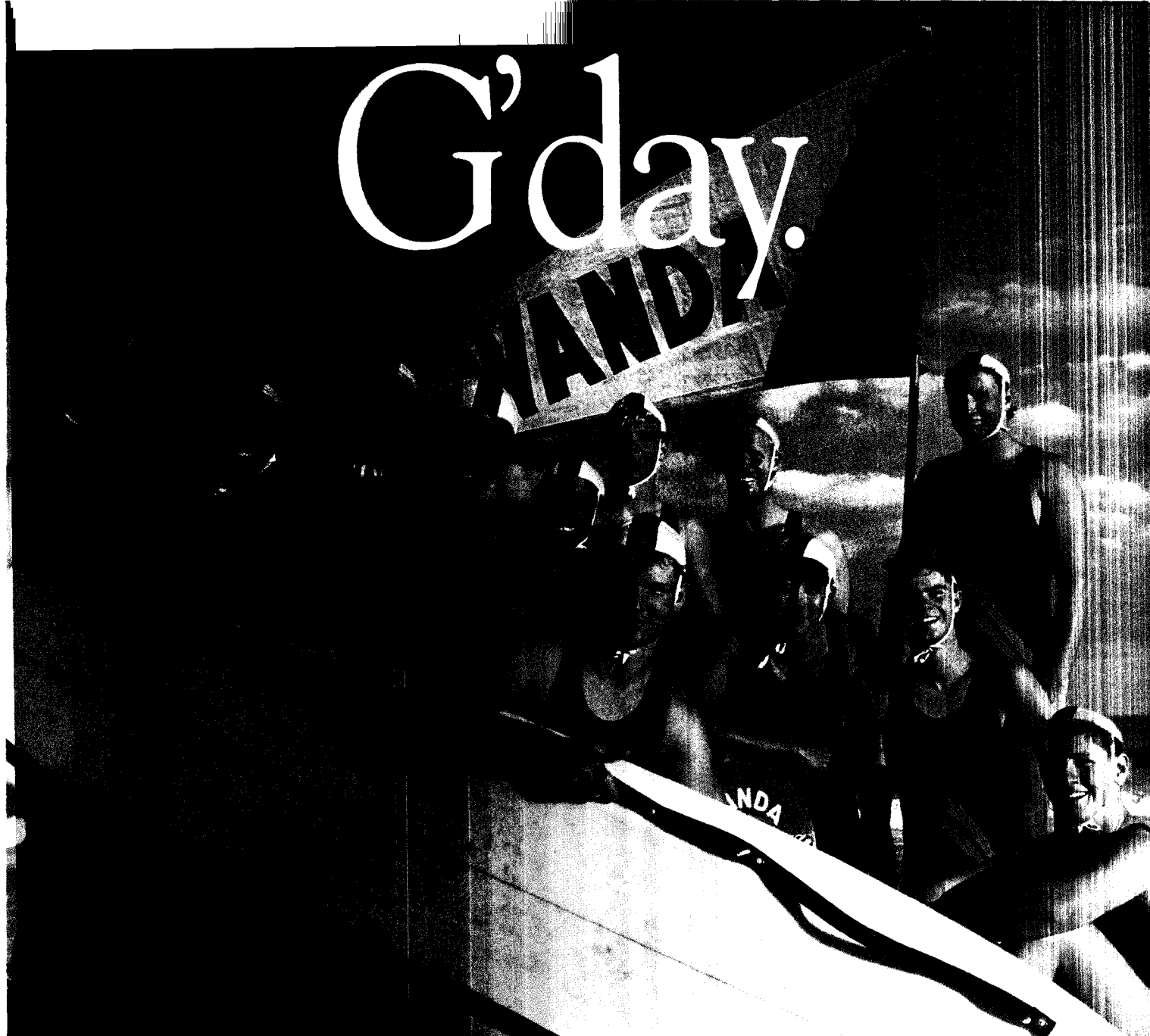
only on the story ahead of us and, through their hard-to-define charm, hold our interest hostage until we have read the last line.

"Put some chrome on it," a bad magazine editor once told a writer about his first sentence; despite all their polish, Cheever's firsts sport little chrome. For that one can look to H. L. Mencken: "Has it been duly marked by historians that William Jennings Bryan's last secular act on this globe of sin was to catch flies?" "When I reach the shades at last it will no doubt astonish Satan to discover, on thumbing my dossier, that I was once a member of the Y.M.C.A." "Whoever it was who translated the Bible into excellent French prose is chiefly responsible for the collapse of Christianity in France." The trouble with beginning this cleverly is that you raise expectations about the piece as a whole which it may not be able to fulfill. Mencken's first sentences are in competition with the rest of his pieces, and to my mind, the first sentences win every time.

THE EFFORT TO make good on the promise of the first sentence, which was too much for Mencken, must stanch innumerable pieces of writing before they have fairly begun. That is because it's possible to write a first sentence that just has to be the last sentence, the last word, on that subject, since it says everything about it in a way that is instantly perceivable as complete. I say it's possible because I have heard of such a case. A distinguished British newspaper proprietor had died, and his paper was under the competitive necessity of making as much of his death as a very liberal hyperbole would allow. So the editor summoned the paper's best writer and drummed into him the herculean expectations the paper had for the obituary he was to write. The writer, who was known to possess a lubricable genius, was taken to a hotel room, furnished with a typewriter and paper, and locked in for the night. Early the next morning the editor opened the door to find the writer slumped over his typewriter, asleep, an empty whiskey bottle at his feet. The room was littered with crumpled sheets of paper, and on the sheet in the typewriter were these words: "Not since the death of Jesus Christ . . ."

—Jack Beatty

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TO ORDER A DRINK.**

You're thirsty for Scotch and water. But if you just say "Scotch and water," you're taking a chance on mediocrity. Say "Ballantine's and water," and you'll get a smooth, mellow, smoky Scotch with a hint of Island peat and a breath of Highland smoke. Your water will taste a lot better, too.

Ballantine's.

THE TRUE TASTE OF SCOTCH.



Ballantine's Blended Scotch Whisky 43% Alc./Vol. (86 proof). ©1989 Maidstone Wine & Spirits Inc., Los Angeles, CA.

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ENOUGH
INFORMATION
ABOUT SCOTCH
TO HAVE A CONVERSATION.

ENOUGH
INFORMATION ABOUT
SCOTCH TO
OPEN A DISTILLERY.

You're out on the town with a friend. But you hesitate before ordering the same old Scotch.

Peering over the bar, you spot a bottle of Ballantine's Finest.

"Hmm. I haven't had that in a while."

"One of the better blends," your friend says.

"Number one in Europe."

So you order Ballantine's and water.

"It has 42 different single malts in it," he says.

"Really? Does that matter?"

"Only if you like your Scotch to be smooth."

You take a sip.

"It is smooth. How come it tastes smoky?"

Your friend explains, "That's from Highland single malts in the blend. Taste it again. It has an earthy flavor, too."

You do and it does.

"That's peat. From the Scottish islands. See, with blended Scotch, the single malts are married together to enhance each other. But you can still taste the individual flavors."

"You know too much. How am I supposed to keep up with that?"

"We have time," he says. "Another round?"

First, you need water. Scotland has more than enough, because it rains so much. And the best, because on its way to the burns and lochs, Scottish water is naturally filtered and purified as it flows through granite or peat.

Second, you need peat. Peat, to put it delicately, is a layer of compressed vegetable matter covering about 1,700,000 acres in Scotland. That's 11% of the entire country. That's a lot of peat. You can taste the peat in a great Scotch like Ballantine's Finest. What you do is cut it into logs and burn it in kilns to stop the malting of your barley.

Third, you need barley. Barley is one of those grains that thrives where you might think only rocks would grow. Which is why it does so well in Scotland. You malt your barley by soaking it in water, then drying it over the peaty fire. Then you grind it, mix in hot water and let it sit for a few hours. Add a little yeast to the liquid and the sugars turn into alcohol. The barley has done its job. You can feed it to cattle.

Fourth, you need the handsome cattle. Some Highland cattle, of the happiest cattle in the world live in Scotland. (Not to mention some of the best tasting.)

Fifth, you need a still. These are the funny looking copper pots without which there would be no Scotch. It is said that Aristotle invented distillation. But sadly, he never lived to taste a fine Scotch like Ballantine's. After distillation, you have whisky. Which longs for barrels in which to grow old.

Sixth, you need barrels. There aren't many oak trees left in Scotland. At least not enough to age Ballantine's Finest.

Seventh, it helps to have an ocean. There's a refreshing scent of sea air in a select few of the single malts used in Ballantine's. Some say it creeps into barrels stored near the ocean. In any case, it adds distinction to the Scotch. It may be that Scotland is the best place to make Scotch precisely because there's no point more than 70 miles from the sea. Kansas is not a good place to make Scotch. And last, you'll need patience. The only thing left to do is wait. If you want your Scotch to be part of Ballantine's Finest, you'll have to wait quite a while, because we don't blend any malt whisky younger than five years. Patience is essential when starting your own distillery. But, as you've read this far, it would seem that you have a good supply of it.

Whew! If the thought of all this work makes you feel a bit tattered, you might enjoy a glass of Ballantine's Finest. Maybe you don't need your own distillery after all.

Aristotle. He would have enjoyed Ballantine's.

Save your pennies for a copper still.

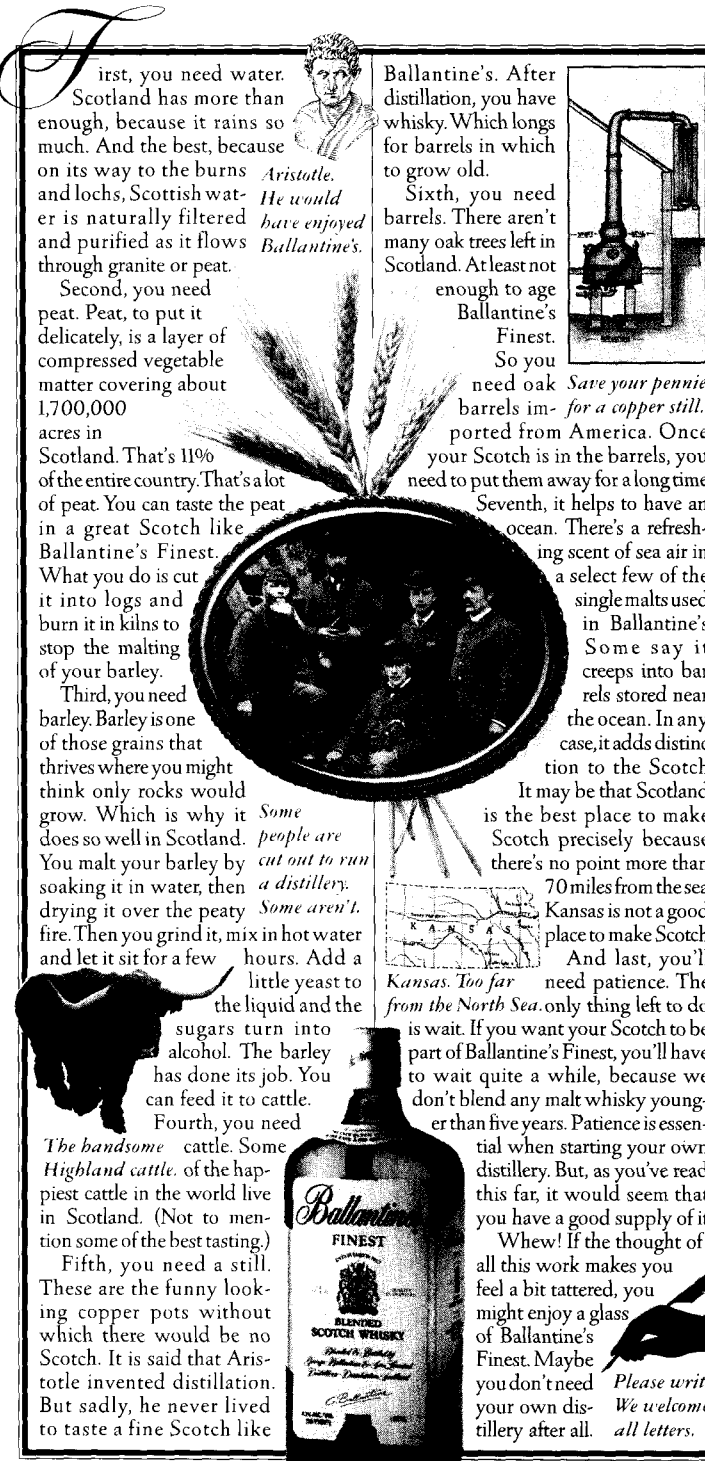
ported from America. Once your Scotch is in the barrels, you need to put them away for a long time.

Some people are cut out to run a distillery. Some aren't.

Some people are cut out to run a distillery. Some aren't.

Kansas. Too far from the North Sea.

Please write. We welcome all letters.



Ballantine's

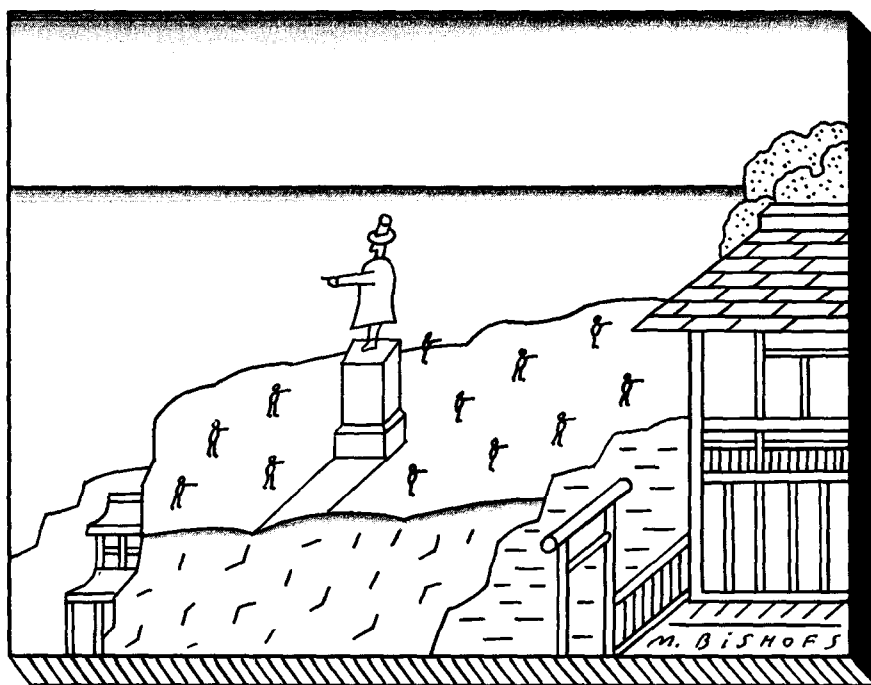
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TOKYO

Japanese Bootstraps

*A few modest suggestions
to improve Japan's relations with
the rest of the world*

"BOYS, BE AMBITIOUS!" Why don't Americans talk this way anymore? In 1876 William S. Clark left the presidency of the Massachusetts Agricultural College and sailed to Hokkaido, the island that was then the raw northern frontier of Japan. He felled trees, started the Sapporo Agricultural College in the clearing, and told his young Japanese students to go out and tame the wild land. Half the public monuments in Hokkaido now include tableaux of Clark pointing toward the horizon and giving his boys the famous three words of advice.

These days America's representatives in Japan sound less sure of themselves. They wheedle and beg for changes in contract-bidding practices, bank-capitalization requirements, and regulations governing retail stores. If only William Clark were available for service on U.S. negotiating teams, he could listen to the Japanese side's sin-

cere assurances that it was trying hard to open Japanese society to the world, and say, "Gentlemen, be ambitious!" He might offer them this plan.

- Get rid of *katakana*. Japanese is written with Chinese characters and a phonetic alphabet called *hiragana*. It has an extra alphabet, *katakana*, for words that have come from foreign languages into Japanese. The use of *katakana* is not like the English practice of italicizing words that are still foreign, like *perestroika* and *Schadenfreude*. It is as if we printed any word that had ever belonged to any language but English—data, pneumonia, cavalier, sushi—in an alphabet different from ours. The many Japanese people named Fukushima write their names with the two Chinese characters that mean "prosperity" and "island." When Japanese papers write about the former U.S. trade negotiator Glenn Fukushima, they go out of their way to spell his name in *katakana* so that no one could possibly mistake him for a real Japanese.

As evidence that their country really is becoming international-minded, Japanese diplomats often point out that more and more families eat *pan*, or bread, at breakfast time, rather than pickles and rice. The word *pan* was adopted from the Portuguese at about the time Columbus sailed for America. It would be a more convincing sign of openness to spell *pan* and other adopted words, from *hotto doggu* to *nekutai*, in

hiragana rather than in ugly *katakana* script. The Koreans can get along with one phonetic alphabet, their logical and systematic *hangul*. Can such a task be beyond the Japanese?

- Get rid of *juku*. The Koreans were ambitious here, too. Fifteen years ago their President Park Chung Hee decided that the "cram schools," where students prepared for university-entrance exams, had become a social menace. They preyed on students' fear of the exams and on the parents' knowledge that children who got bad scores on the exams, and therefore went to bad colleges, would always have bad jobs. As cram schools became more expensive, they made the examinations largely a test of the parents' wealth. Park outlawed them at a stroke. (Unfortunately, last year they were legalized again.)

In Japan *juku* illustrate exactly what Park was worried about. So many students attend that few end up with a real edge on the others. The net effect is to penalize those who don't go (many girls, most students from working-class families) and grind down the ones who spend three or four hours each day in *juku*, after seven or eight hours in school. Shutting down the *juku* would cost half the resident foreigners in Tokyo their jobs as English teachers, but some sacrifices are always necessary for the greater good. Those teachers could go back to their homelands and improve schools there, which need it more. The Japanese *juku* teachers could teach Japanese overseas. Which leads us to:

- Bring back the draft. Japanese parents moan that their children have no discipline. The children complain that they're trapped in a predictable life plan that runs from grade school through *juku* to university and on to life in a "salaryman" family. Foreigners are denied the opportunity to see the Japanese character at its best, since their main exposure is to package-tour hordes of Japanese.

The way to eliminate all these complaints at once is to draft able-bodied Japanese students when they finish high school, for two years of compulsory service overseas. They would work not for the Japanese military but for the United Nations—in peace-keeping forces in the Middle East or Central America, in refugee camps and hospitals in Cambodia or Bangladesh, in old-age homes and technical schools, or

***In Bangkok, good things come
in enormous packages.***

There was a time in Thailand when pachyderms meant political power, and a white elephant was worth its weight in gold. While times have changed—elephants today are used to symbolize good luck instead of wealth—there are still a number of big surprises in store for the businessman in old Siam.

Mai pen rai.

Pronounced "my pen rye," this is translated as "it doesn't matter," and it conveys the Thai attitude toward business and life as well. It means it's best to avoid open

conflicts and negotiate patiently — shouting will get you nowhere.

Shy Thais.

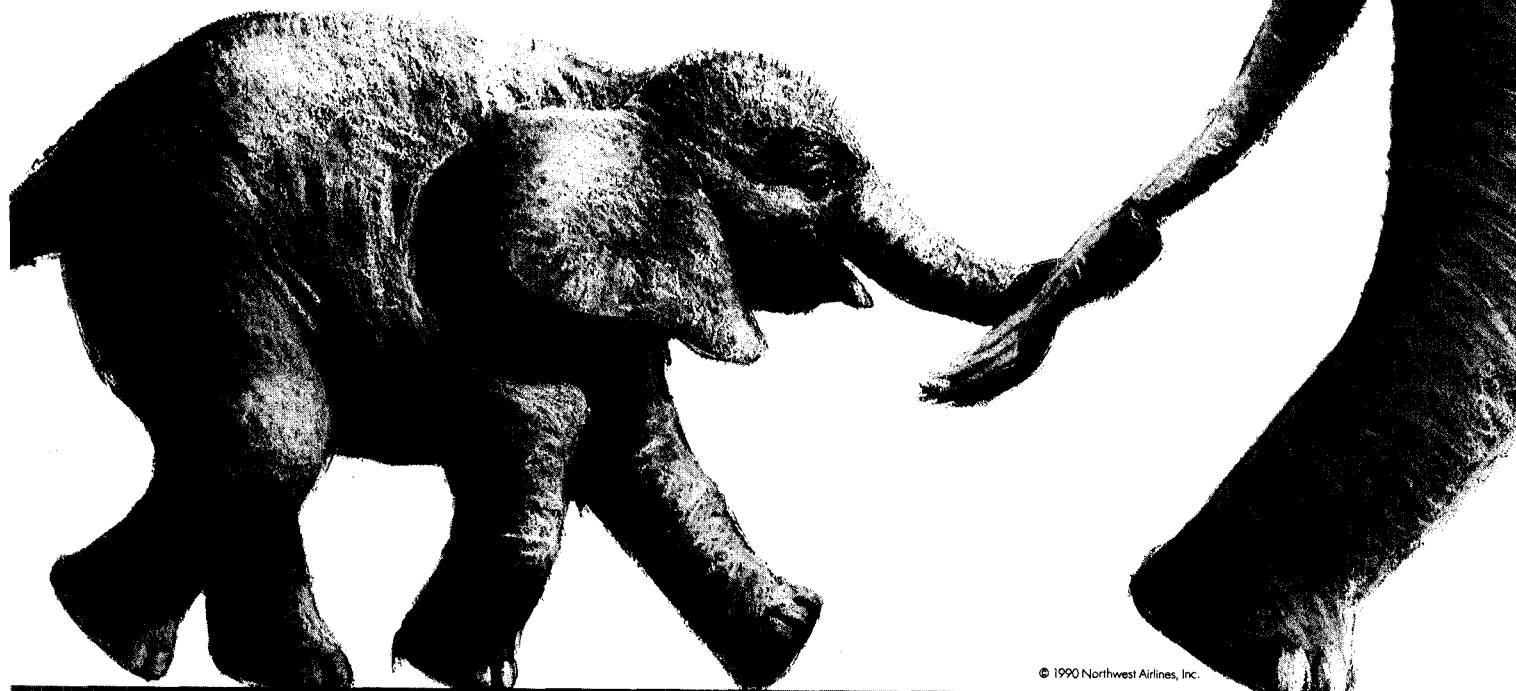
Thais seldom invite foreigners home—entertaining is done in restaurants. Use a private dining room at the Oriental Hotel (tel. 236-0400) for special occasions.

The how of the wai.

Instead of a handshake, try the Thai form of greeting, the *wai* (pronounced "why"). Bring your palms together, fingers up, and bow—it's most respectful.

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wherever they could do some good. The young people would come back rested after their high school ordeal, and they would be much better prepared both linguistically and culturally to help Japan deal with the rest of the world. Japan could use the money it doesn't spend on the military to pay living allowances to the draftees.

To get the plan rolling, Japan could transfer its thousands upon thousands of riot police, who now loiter in big gray buses all across the country, to the UN peace-keeping command. (No other developed country has so few riots or so many surplus riot police.) Japan's new relationship with the UN could be part of a package deal: in exchange for giving money and talent Japan would get a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, and Japanese would become the sixth official UN language. The UN headquarters should also be moved from New York to Tokyo. This would give Americans a friendlier impression of foreigners, by reducing the number of cars with diplomatic license plates that are parked illegally; would improve America's image overseas, by giving fewer dignitaries a close look at Manhattan; and would bolster the lobby inside Japan for lower prices and more reasonable living conditions.

If conscripted service seems contrary to the spirit of a new, individualistic Japan, market incentives could do the job. Big Japanese companies, and the Ministries of Finance and Foreign Affairs, where the best students want to work, could announce a new hiring plan. Right now the only factor they really care about is what university an applicant attended. Under the new plan they would hire on the basis of university *and* the two years of service, overseas or in nursing homes in Japan. Someone from the right university who had not put in his years of service could still get a job, but he would be at a permanent seniority disadvantage.

- Change the consumption tax to an export tax. This is so obvious that it barely qualifies for the "Be ambitious!" list. Japan already has extremely high retail prices, but when the government wanted to raise money last year, it slapped on an across-the-board consumption tax. Japan has relatively low export prices, and the government says that its greatest desire is to slow

down the export surge. To point out the problem is to see the solution. By switching from a consumption tax to an export tax Japan could stop making its own consumers subsidize consumers overseas.

- Turn air bases in Japan into airports. American soldiers in Japan don't really defend against invasion. If that is their purpose, why aren't any of them in Hokkaido, the part of Japan that the Soviet Union is theoretically most likely to attack? The U.S. Army and Air Force troops are in Japan mainly to symbolize a military alliance, which would remain even if the soldiers were pulled out—especially from the bases jammed into metropolitan Tokyo. Japan should let the U.S. Navy keep its port facilities at Yokosuka but should politely close the other Tokyo-area bases, at Zama and Yokota. When the American soldiers left, civilian airlines would come in. Narita Airport, inconvenient and overcrowded, is a significant bottleneck in Japan's contact with the world. The Ministry of Transport should let any carrier operate flights out of the new Zama and Yokota terminals as long as the fares are lower than those now charged from Narita.

- Learn from Spain. The Spanish empire's greatest days came only after Ferdinand and Isabella solved the bickering between Aragon and Castille by marriage, bringing the quarrel inside the family. Most of Europe's royal families have intermarried, if only to broaden the gene pool. Japan's imperial family has always been seen as a proxy for the whole nation's interests. If Japan really wants to marry its fate to the rest of the world's, the current Crown Prince might take the proxy role literally and look overseas for his bride. Various royal families, from Southeast Asia to Scandinavia, offer attractive candidates for the role. Among America's royalty, Caroline Kennedy is already taken, but there is still Brooke Shields, to whom the Crown Prince was once introduced, or the ideal future Empress, the lovely Cher.

After they heard the new Clark plan, the Japanese could retire for contemplation. They might think about America's abundance of drugs, guns, lawyers, and bond traders, and its shortage of nurses and engineers. "Foreign friends, be ambitious!" they would say.

—James Fallows

"The Designing of A Fragrance"

Fragrances! They exhilarate, excite and intrigue. (And, they date back to the very beginning of civilization itself.) Frankincense, myrrh, cassia and cinnamon are mentioned in the Bible; perfume was a part of ancient Chinese and Egyptian religious ceremonies; the Romans blended as many as 27 ingredients together to create a single scent.

Today, the designing of fragrances is infinitely more complex. While there are 13 essential fragrance families, there are hundreds of natural and synthetic elements available for developing an individual fragrance identity. The most important ones are those used for the base component and the fixative.

The base component is generally a natural oil which acts as a foundation: floral oils such as jasmine or rose, oils and essences derived from spices, citrus products, woods, grasses, leaves and moss. New synthetics offer modern woody elements as well as those that are not produced by nature, such as Lily of the Valley and Gardenia.

Fixatives "hold" the fragrance together and give it long lasting qualities. Some of the most widely used are ambergris which is produced by the Sperm Whale and civet from the Civet Cat.

Fragrances are now more popular than ever before with 800 currently on the market—over 500 for women alone. I recognized that creating and introducing a successful new fragrance for women in this crowded arena presented a challenge that paralleled designing clothing for women. Both must be original and memorable. Both must capture the very essence of what a woman is, intellectually, physically as well as emotionally.

I spent over 18 months developing and testing more than 50 different scents on over 3,000 women before deciding on the one that would carry my name. "Cassini" is a blend of more than 250 elements, of which 15 define its actual personality and the distinctive signature that reflects my lifelong understanding of the feminine mystique. What I ultimately developed is a night fragrance, dressy rather than tweedy—the kind of scent that I consider indispensable to creating fantasies.

Olga Cassini

CASSINI



A love affair that never ends.

Oleg Cassini



The finals of France's 1989 national spelling championship, in Paris

EUROPE

"Unity" Spells Trouble

A common language won't work in Europe, where language stirs nationalistic pride and people know the advantages of not understanding each other

NO ONE WANTS to belittle European unity, not at this bracing time of change. But one truth needs facing. An immovable obstacle stands in the way of the kind of unity envisaged by those seeking a United States of Europe, and it is the way people speak. The United States itself offers no guidance here. The lesson that America is America because it was prudent enough to insist on one language is irrelevant to European integration. In Europe there are a dozen determined languages that are never going to surrender to English. Say "language" and you are saying pride, identity, roots, communication, and all the things that stir the heart. As President Mario Soares of Portugal puts it: "My country is my language."

This unhelpful truth has a habit of

revealing itself just when European federalists least care to see it—at European Community summit meetings. These take place every six months, attended by the heads of government of the twelve member states and conducted in nine official tongues. As a tribute to communal thinking, the summits may work. As an example of it, they don't. They come perilously close to disinformation exercises.

Here is what happens. During the summit, spokespersons for the government leaders offer press briefings at propitious moments. Since Dutch spokespersons speak Dutch, Spanish spokespersons speak Spanish, and so on, the purveyors of news find themselves addressing the people who understand them—journalists and TV cameramen from their own countries. This is precisely what they want. They tell the journalists what makes their leader look good. Language apartheid is a useful weapon.

The EC is democratic if nothing else, and no rules bar an English journalist from attending a German briefing. But such behavior is odd, and though no one would ever openly complain about intrusion, outsiders are left in no doubt about how they are looked upon, particularly if they attempt a question. The result is that each national delegation puts a spin on the summit, and this shows up on the front pages in the different countries. Eu-

rope's front pages can tell diametrically opposed stories. Journalists, being mistrustful and skeptical as well as linguistically limited, do harden themselves against abuse. But they can't butt their heads against language.

While officials from all member countries exploit this fact, the man who makes the baldest use of it is Margaret Thatcher's glowering mouthpiece, Bernard Ingham. Since Britain's Prime Minister is the only leader overtly opposed to a federal Europe, Ingham's job is to try to embroider her solitude by making it appear that others secretly sympathize with her. Ingham's sparring partners in the press can patch together decent approximations of reality by swapping notes with foreign newspaper colleagues, but there is no such thing as a balanced, dependable account of a European summit, from any quarter. Maybe American journalists come closest to providing one, out of nonpartisan curiosity.

Language-related statistics will show what I'm getting at. Belgians commonly receive twenty-six TV channels, broadcast in a spread of languages from their own country and surrounding ones, whereas folk in the larger European countries receive far fewer, the French least of all (six). Two conclusions offer themselves. First, little two-tongued Belgium is at the linguistic crossroads of French, English, Dutch, and German, and is obliged to entertain itself in several languages because it has no champion of its own; second, the European nations that count most—Germany, France, Britain, Italy, and Spain—tend to close themselves off from their neighbors' tongues and, by extension, from their cultures.

THE FRENCH ARE devils in matters of language. Of all the European nations they are the most authoritarian in a domain where flexibility should rule. At the moment, they—the government, not the people—are thinking of changing French spelling. Spelling has been the cause of periodic crises in French history. The language is virtually impossible to write without error. In normal times this breeds a perverse national joy, Gallic pride in adversity. However, President François Mitterrand's Socialist government has set itself the extraordinary task of lifting France's level

When its egg hatches, the cuckoo will know all our secrets...



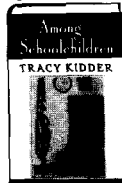
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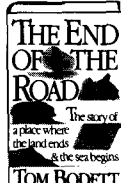
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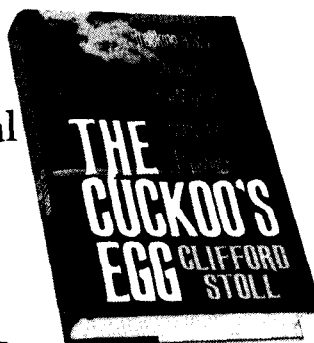


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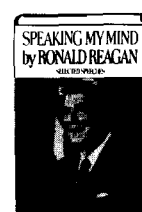


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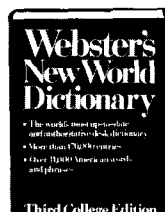
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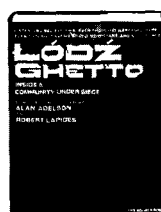
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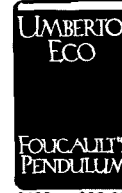
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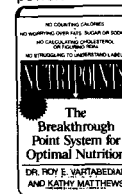
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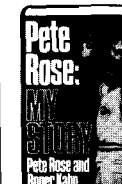
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of education to an altitude at which 80 percent of students will pass the tough baccalaureate exam, the ticket to a promising job. At present the pass rate is about 40 percent. Surveying the long odds against the government's plan, many teachers insist that the solution is to simplify the spelling that floors so many "bac" candidates (to lower marking standards is regarded as too crass a way out).

The spelling of most languages evolves quite naturally, with usage. You know—"night" begins slipping ominously into "nite," "through" into "thru," and so on. Not French. The Prime Minister, Michel Rocard, asked the recently formed Conseil Supérieur de la Langue Française (High Council for the French Language) to come up with reforms that he and the august Académie Française, the guardian of the purity of the language, would, all being well, require Frenchmen to use. From that point on no alternatives would be permitted. Fluff your spelling on the official government form and you can forget your tax rebate. The sort of changes being discussed are more a wash and brushup than a radical departure. Circumflexes that sit on vowels (*château, forêt*) would disappear; the mad feud between single and double consonants in the same root (*rationnel, rationalisme*) would be settled in favor of one of them; rogue plurals (*genoux*, not *genous*) would be tamed, past participles shorn of masculine and feminine wiles.

All this just might improve *bac* results, but the backlash is fierce even before the first decree has hit the dictionaries. No one who has struggled to master the placement of the circumflex, and I include myself, will renounce it without a fight. Years ago, when other kids were learning to smoke or drink beer, I made a substantial personal investment. And how can Nîmes and Angoulême accept being stripped of their municipal dignity? This is not a question for French authorities to decide by decree. It concerns everyone who ever entered a French class anywhere in the world.

FOR FIVE YEARS NOW, starting in the spring and working up to a pre-Christmas finale, France has dramatized its linguistic passion with a national spelling championship. The later stages of the contest are televised

live, enabling millions to submit simultaneously to the same dictation that the contenders are writing down. In France spelling has the kind of appeal that chess holds for Russians, baseball for Americans. We could go further without exaggeration: correctly terminated past participles are to the French what lederhosen are to Austrians. Last year's spelling final was held in the multi-domed National Library, in Paris, where solemn ranks of lamp-topped desks provided space for 252 finalists—132 French citizens and 120 foreigners, some French-speaking, others redoubtable French buffs from Japan, Argentina, and other countries. Each one had advanced through grueling heats to earn a desk at the National Library.

Hoping to feel my way into France's soul, I entered the final in a subcategory for foreign journalists, a johnny-come-lately gang offered a walkover into the final in return for our show of concern. Moreover, our contingent had to complete only half the dictation. At the pre-fight cocktail party I met Bob Durling, a full candidate from Santa Cruz, California, one of two U.S. finalists. Among the score of Americans who had competed in the earlier stages, eleven came from the San Francisco Bay area, including Durling, who is a professor at UC Santa Cruz, although not of French—his living is Italian literature. As a teenager in New York, he tested his skills by speaking French in the subway with his best friend. "I was an insufferable little bastard," he told me. He noted with some relief that the Académie Française had announced opposition to any wholesale redrafting of French spelling. The candidate-guests at the cocktail party drank moderately, saving themselves for the big moment on the morrow. "You can't imagine this happening in any other country," Durling remarked happily. "Italians know how to spell. Their language is written ninety-nine percent how it sounds. French is crotchety." I sensed that he would hate to see the quirks in French disappear.

The atmosphere in the National Library was highly charged the next day. You could see the tension in the candidates' too-ready smiles, affected to suggest the right degree of insouciance. But these contestants were beautifully trained. Their brows bulged with grammatical trivia. For myself, attempting the dictation without preparation re-

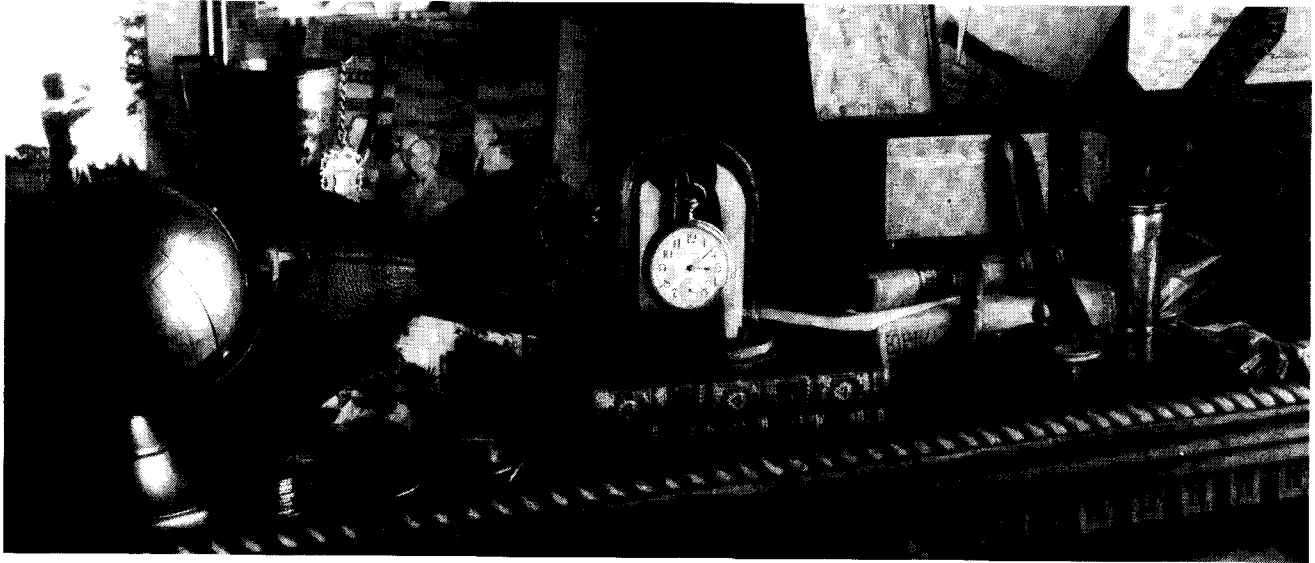
minded me of the humiliation I had once brought upon myself by entering a marathon without training.

The crow of a cock launched the proceedings—a nice chauvinist touch. Then the bookish French TV star Bernard Pivot, of the cultural program *Apostrophes*, gave a preliminary reading of the dictation to acclimatize the contestants. A buzz of excitement rose to the vaults, interspersed with whispers of "You swine, Pivot" . . . "shameful" . . . "diabolical." It was true. Indiana Jones could not have devised a more deadly minefield. Pivot admitted, before starting a slower reading, at dictation pace, that there were plenty of traps. In case several likely champions finished with the same number of errors, he dictated three further sentences to separate the men from the boys. These, he said, were "terrifying." (One of the most fiendish sentences was in the main dictation: "*Je suis parfois si obsédée par la faim que, penchée sur les trésors de la Bibliothèque nationale, je les confonds avec ceux de la gastronomie: manuscrits médiévaux et fricandeaux, palimpsestes minoens et courts-bouillons, in-folio et sot-l'y-laisse, ainsi que les culs-de-lampe historiés et les cancoillottes très parfumées.*" . . .)

Until then not even the most distinguished French spellers, members of the Academy included, had managed to get through a final without making mistakes. This time, to general incredulity, an error-free paper was handed in by a classical-literature professor from Strasbourg. When the state-run TV network went live in prime time that night to explain the pitfalls and announce the results, the nation's delight at the winner's performance was twofold. Not only was he faultless but he came from a town where people communicate in a German dialect.

OF COURSE, IT IS not because the French language is impossible to write properly that a federal Europe will be hard to achieve. The point is this: The immense popular appeal of Monsieur Pivot's national spelling bee demonstrates that forward-looking Europeans who call for the acceptance of English as the language of Europe have got it all wrong. You can't expect English to replace the deepest emotions Europeans feel. I daresay Germans and Italians feel as strongly as the French about this. The

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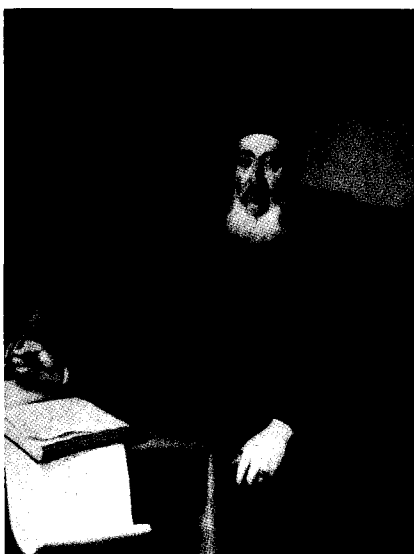
"English solution" might be halfway valid if European unity were only about business and improved economic management. Parents in continental Europe increasingly insist that their children learn English, because mastery of English leads to the top jobs with the most money. Federalists know that a United States of Europe must take into account much more than that.

Those who argue that language differences won't obstruct European unity often cite quiet, contented Switzerland as an example of how multilingual federalism can work. But Swiss togetherness is a myth. I know several German-speaking Swiss from Zurich, bright professional people, who have never in their lives been to Geneva, and as many French-speaking Genevise who haven't been to Zurich. Within their little country the two main contingents of Swiss hardly know or speak to each other. Switzerland would work much less well than it does if it had to shoulder the responsibility of a leading world role, as a federal Europe would. Then there is the example of the Soviet Union. With its many different peoples and languages pressed together, the Soviet empire offers an appalling example of botched unity—mainly, as Mikhail Gorbachev knows, because of the link between language and nationalism.

No one is happy about the language barrier except maybe Margaret Thatcher—and except, also, the 3,500 people handsomely employed by the EC as interpreters, translators, and support staff, and the additional tens of thousands employed by corporate Europe simply to ensure that companies are able to explain themselves to cross-border partners and customers. Here I should declare an interest. Disappointed though I will be if the United States of Europe never gets off the ground, my conclusion that it will not has paid off. If I hadn't sensed that Europe's language differences were intractable, I would not have applied such youthful zeal to exploring French grammar. And I would certainly have made more than the twelve errors that led Monsieur Pivot to award me second prize in the foreign journalists' category (I was trounced by a Left Bank contributor to *Playboy*). The prize was a pen, with which to cross out "federal" before Europe.

—David Lawday

COURTESY OF THE MEKHITARIST FATHERS OF VIENNA



Manoug Petrossian (1676–1749)

VENICE

Job's People

*Far from the ethnic strife
in Armenia and Azerbaijan, an
obscure order of monks tends
to a people's soul*

THE AZIENDA DEL CONSORZIO Trasporti Veneziano, Venice's waterborne-transport company, runs a vaporetto eight times a day from the wharves off St. Mark's Square to the Isola di San Lazzaro degli Armeni, a mile and a half out in the Lagoon. The twenty-minute ride follows ancient channels marked out by sagging wooden piles. After two intermediate stops the Byzantine-style cupola of the church of St. Lazarus heaves into view. Minutes later a deckhand tosses down a gangplank, and passengers drift up to the cluster of brick-and-stucco buildings that shelter the Armenian Congregation of Mekhitarist Fathers.

The visitors may have time, before a priest appears, to examine an inscribed stone affixed to a wall, bearing a testimonial from George Gordon, Lord Byron, an admirer and sometime pupil of the Mekhitarist fathers. Byron settled in Venice in 1816, before enlisting (and dying) in the cause of Greek independence. Writing to an English friend that December, he mentioned taking up the study of the formidable Armenian language. "My mind wanted some-

thing craggy to break upon," he explained, "to torture me into attention." Mornings the poet took himself by gondola to San Lazzaro and retired to a library over the monastery kitchen to "hobble Armenian with the friars," as he put it.

In a year, under the direction of his tutor, Padre Paschal, he had mastered the language and its largely Greek-derived script of thirty-eight characters well enough to parse scriptural passages. Yet even Byron had to concede that "it is, to be sure, a Waterloo of an alphabet."

This month marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the beginning of the bloodbath in Turkey in which as many as 1.5 million Armenians died at the hands of ethnic and sectarian antagonists. Solemn commemorations of the Armenian genocide will be made in the various places around the world where the many expatriate Armenians now find themselves—and of course in the Armenian republic of the Soviet Union, still beset by ancient animosities.

But the historical resonance will be particularly strong in the observances to be conducted by the Mekhitarist fathers on their tiny island, where they have tended the flame of Armenian national consciousness for nearly three centuries.

ON A RECENT visit to San Lazzaro I was met in the cloister walkway by a spare old priest with a neatly trimmed gray beard and wire-rimmed bifocals. Padre Giuseppe—to use the Italian rendition of his Armenian name, Hair Housep (his last name is Behesnilian)—has spent most of his life on San Lazzaro. The son of a Protestant Armenian merchant in Ethiopia, he came to Venice for secondary studies at the Mekhitarists' Moorat-Raphael College, in the Dorsoduro quarter. Captivated by the order's peaceful life and also by its singular mission—the preservation and transmission of Armenian culture—he converted to Armenian Catholicism and eventually took his religious vows. Now he is in charge of showing visitors the manuscript collection and other artifacts. The island opens a window on an ancient people, the regeneration of whose national vitality in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was in large measure the legacy of Mekhitar, an itinerant *vardapets*, or learned

monk, who founded the order and brought it to its current home.

Born Manough Petrossian, in 1676 in Sivas, in what is now Turkey, Mekhitar entered a monastery at fifteen and took the name by which he is remembered, which means "The Consoler." The young monk roamed the monastery circuit from Etchmiadzine, the see, or seat, of the Armenian Church, to Constantinople. Western thought swirling into the stagnant Armenian Church culture had a bracing effect upon him, which was reinforced by contacts with Jesuits and other Latin orders. Around 1700, fellow Armenians denounced him to Ottoman authorities as a *frangui*, meaning someone under a presumably subversive French influence, and he sought asylum on the French embassy grounds. Before his eventual flight to the Venetian-controlled Peloponnesus, in Greece, he founded the Adoptive Sons of the Holy Virgin and Preachers of Penitence, as the Mekhitarist order was first known.

As Padre Giuseppe showed me the way off the open-air cloister to the stone church in which Mekhitar is buried, he said, "His ideal was this: to illuminate the Armenian nation for the glory of the Lord." We stopped in a passageway hung with a series of prints and photographs showing the island in different periods. A tenth-century Benedictine abbey gave way to the medieval leper colony from whose patron saint—Lazarus—the island took its name. But the island was abandoned and derelict in 1717 when the Venetian Senate ceded it to the Mekhitarists. The bearded fathers had washed up in Venice two years earlier after fleeing an Ottoman offensive in the Peloponnesus. Venice, bursting with monasteries and convents, had barred new religious orders from settling on its canals. But Venetians and Armenians had historical and commercial ties, and a common quarrel with the Turks. Mekhitar, a patriarchal figure even at age thirty-nine, also enjoyed Vatican favor as a likely bridge between the Roman Catholic and Armenian churches, which were riven in the sixth century by a quarrel over Christ's divinity and humanity. Mekhitar did lead his small fold into Roman Catholicism, which exerted an attraction on many other Armenians at the time. Nonetheless, the vast majority of his countrymen today are mem-

bers of the Armenian Apostolic Church, which has not achieved full communion with Rome.

In the quiet of the island church, Padre Giuseppe pointed out apertures in the walls, now bricked up, through which lepers once peered during mass. And he talked of Mekhitar. "He was very patriotic, our founder. He said, 'I would not give up my faith for the nation, or the nation for my faith.'" Perhaps the most important tool that Mekhitar employed to gain his ends was the Armenian language, intimately associated with national identity from early times. The runic Armenian alphabet was devised about A.D. 405 by the monk Mesrop Mashtots, roughly a century after Saint Gregory the Illuminator had converted Armenia to Christianity. "As soon as the language was ready we had the most beautiful translation of the Bible," Padre Giuseppe said. "Maybe not precise, but beautiful."

Armenian monks also were fervent nationalists. The Armenian Church was a bulwark supporting the sovereign kingdom of Armenia in precarious equipoise among various great powers. Showing me the manuscript collection, Padre Giuseppe pointed out a fragment of parchment. "Here, from the sixth century, just a piece," he said. "For as Armenia was on the invasion route, the first thing the barbarians did was to burn our books." In the seventh century the first Muslim expansion brought pillage and decimation of the Armenian ruling class. In the ninth century Prince Ashot, of the Bagratid Dynasty, ushered in a short-lived medieval Golden Age. In 1064 the fabled Armenian capital of Ani fell to another invasion, marking the end of what is known as Greater Armenia. A number of Armenians resettled in Cilicia, along Turkey's Mediterranean coast, where they established Lesser Armenia and provided critical support to the Crusades. The new kingdom fell victim to a succession of Muslim conquests, and by Mekhitar's time most of Armenia was under Ottoman rule.

As a non-Muslim community, the Armenians paid heavy tribute to the ruling Ottoman Turks and received only second-class citizenship in return. Yet they were often better educated than the Turks, and served the Sublime Porte as able administrators—as the distinguished portraits and curios

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in the San Lazzaro collection reflect. In an antiquarian's delight of a library, visitors can inspect the mummy and sarcophagus of Nemenket Amen, an Egyptian official of the fifteenth century B.C., from Diospolis. It was presented to the monastery in 1825 by the prominent Armenian Bogos Bey Yusuf, an Egyptian minister plenipotentiary under Mehemet Ali, the founder of modern Egypt. Men like Bogos Bey served their masters well, but their simpler kinsmen in distant provinces were subject to bureaucratic abuse and periodic depredation.

In the tranquillity of Venice and in the schools they had founded throughout Armenia, the Mekhitarists meanwhile were laying the foundations for an Armenian renaissance. At mealtimes in the walnut-paneled refectory, which was designed by the founder, the Mekhitarists listened, as their successors do today, to seminarians reading scriptural or classical Armenian selections from a pulpit set high in the wall. Soon after establishing themselves on San Lazzaro the Mekhitarists published an illustrated Armenian Bible and a classical-Armenian grammar. In 1784–1786 Father Michael Chamchian published his monumental, 3,000-page *History of Armenia*, which helped to re-ignite smoldering national consciousness. Other Mekhitarists composed inspirational verse or music. The Mekhitarists' *Haykazian Bararan* (Armenian dictionary), issued in two volumes in 1836 and 1837, became, and remains, a cultural landmark. In addition to collecting precious illuminated manuscripts and other early Armenian documents, the Mekhitarists translated Western European works into Armenian.

Even as the Armenians regained their sense of nationhood, however, potent forces released by the Ottoman decline and the onset of the First World War were building toward their nation's destruction. Fearful of Russian expansion into Turkish Armenia and citing suspicions of Armenian loyalty, the Turks pursued a series of pogroms whose consequences stir ethnic passions to this day.

PADRE GIUSEPPE struck me as a kind and Christian man, and yet he disclosed strong feelings on the subject of the Muslims, against whom Armenians have so often been pitted. "Why so much rage against the

Armenians?" he demanded when we touched on the subject of Nagorno-Karabakh, the largely Armenian enclave inside predominantly Muslim Azerbaijan, where Soviet forces have been deployed to quell civil strife. "Those people are all furious because when they leave the Armenians in peace, they become prosperous, because they are hardworking." Religious intolerance and economic jealousy combined with geopolitical tensions and Turkish nationalism to produce the massacres that occurred repeatedly in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and, as noted, reached a bloody climax in Turkey in 1915.

The Mekhitarists were devastated by the violence: After 1915 they shut down their schools in Erzurum, Kadiköy, Smyrna, Trebizond, and elsewhere in Turkey; the Armenian communities they served had been decimated or dispersed. (Only the school in Istanbul remained in operation.) In Aleppo, Syria, Mekhitarists gave succor to those who had survived the forced desert marches from Turkey, and then they followed the exiles to Greece, Bulgaria, Lebanon, Palestine, Egypt, Argentina, France, and the United States. Barred by the Bolsheviks from teaching in Soviet Armenia, they made it their mission to sustain the language and culture in the diaspora. This labor is shared by the Mekhitarists of San Lazzaro and another branch of the same order, which broke away after Mekhitar's death and today is based in Vienna, and by the teaching orders of the mainstream Armenian Apostolic, or Gregorian, Church.

Of the approximately 5.7 million people of Armenian descent in the world today, 2.9 million live in the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, and another 1.2 million are distributed throughout Georgia and Azerbaijan. The largest contingent of the diaspora is found in the United States and Canada, a group that numbers some 620,000, with the majority concentrated in southern California—250,000 Armenians live in Los Angeles alone. About 460,000 are spread through Lebanon, Iran, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Qatar. There are 300,000 Armenians in France, and another 50,000 scattered through Greece, Britain, Italy, Switzerland, Bulgaria, and Romania. About 15,000 can be found in India and other

parts of the Far East; 10,000 live in Australia. A community of 80,000 lives in Argentina, and smaller groups in Brazil, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Only 50,000 Armenians remain in Turkey, mainly in Istanbul.

But the Mekhitarists of the Venetian order, about thirty-five strong, remain a reference point for the world's Armenians. The San Lazzaro publishing house and print shop still turn out Armenian books and publications, including the journal *Basmavep*, which Padre Boghos Levon Zekian, its former editor, described to me as "the patriarch of the Armenian press." Continuously published since 1843, it is one of the most eminent journals of Armenology. "Even in Armenia I have heard many times that after the motherland, they look at San Lazzaro as the most important Armenian territory," Padre Zekian said. "Not in the sense of extraterritoriality; but the island has three hundred years of Armenian history, so it is a symbol of Armenia." The attachment to San Lazzaro and its occupants came across as I leafed through the visitors' book on a table in the room where Nemenket Amen's mummy and the sword of the last Armenian king are displayed. "Long live the Armenian Mekhitarist fathers!" one French Armenian woman had written in the book when she visited San Lazzaro in May of 1988. "Long live the millennial Armenians, of whom I am proud to be part!"

"IF THE SCRIPTURES are rightly understood," Byron wrote in a fragment later found among his papers, possibly a draft preface to an English-Armenian grammar on which he collaborated,

it was in Armenia that Paradise was placed, Armenia, which has paid as dearly as the descendants of Adam for that fleeting participation of its soil in the happiness of Him who was created from its dust. It was in Armenia that the flood first abated and the dove alighted. But with the disappearance of Paradise itself may be dated almost the unhappiness of the country, for though long a powerful kingdom, it was scarcely ever an independent one, and the satraps of Persia and the pachas of Turkey have alike desolated the region where God created man in his own image.

—Brendan Murphy

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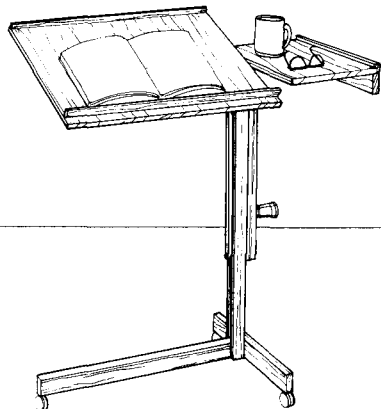


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THE FRANK REVIEW INTERVIEWS INTERVIEWS HUGH FRANK [NO RELATION]

BY ALAN AINSWORTH

HUGH FRANK LIVES with his second wife outside Savannah, Georgia, in a remodeled Colonial. In their connecting living room and gallery is a massive metal sculpture by their friend Hughes Jimmy; opposite, tall windows open to rich magnolias. Asked if he placed his paintings leaning against the light-gray wall so that they might become three-dimensional objects, Frank says, "No; I haven't bought hooks." His studio is thirty minutes into the country. He likes the distance.

He spoke more than expected. He considers himself unusual in this respect. "Sculptors," he says, "are illiterate and unintelligible." Hugh Frank is neither. His attempt to shave a square mile of women's legs near Hankville, Utah, captured the nation's attention, and while some may view it as overhyped media event or bad conceptual art, Frank disagrees: "I was able to tap into some deep-rooted problems in America." Because Frank shuns tape recorders, two court reporters recorded our interview about what Time has called "the art spectacle of the decade."

The Frank Review Interviews: What was the birth of the event?

Hugh Frank: One night I said to Peggy [Peggy Frank Peggy, the personality host and Frank's first wife], "You should be careful shaving your armpits, which have more hairs and nerves per square inch than your legs." And then, "Square inch. Square foot, yard. Acre. Square mile. A square mile of leg hair." It struck me.

TFRI: And that was it?

HF: Pretty much.

TFRI: You have done welding on Hughes Jimmy's *Large Metal Objects of Art*, yet you don't do metal art yourself. Why?

HF: Both Hughes and I went to Virginia Commonwealth Sculpting School, but he could never weld, so he had to hire me. My own art involves epoxying junk, all textures, into slabs and then carving.

TFRI: Both adding and subtracting.

HF: Yes. The event also does that as I add women and subtract hair. Now all

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that hair is epoxied to thousands of boot heels.

TFRI: Interesting process. Did you consider waxing?

HF: No. I don't care what they say, waxing is just too painful.

TFRI: Did you have difficulty selling the idea?

HF: Oh, no, not at all, no. I thought, "Corporate sponsorship. Shaving companies." Furious bidding. I took Remington because Victor Kiam is just as patriotic as he seems on TV. It added up. The women were to be placed in an outline of the United States, and, of course, I'd start shaving at Plymouth. Later I thought of the Mole and Thomas photographs. Imagine, in 1918, twenty-five thousand soldiers forming The Human Liberty Bell at Camp Dix. No McDonald's blimp, either.

TFRI: The networks made it quite a show, didn't they?

HF: ZZ Top, the rock band, really put on a good show, even though they refused Schick and HBO's million to shave those beautiful beards. Frank Beard, the band member without one, and I fought for a live audience, but all we got were PortaDressers for the models and a small village for the media.

TFRI: All this reminds me of Michael Heizer's earth sculptures.

HF: Of course. As he bulldozes, he's very into process. The locals aren't as interested in his dirt as they are in my women.

TFRI: Your projects develop for film more than his.

HF: I find excitement in movement, in the flicker of film. I want the inherent danger of action, whirring blade to skin. No room for error. No lucky accidents.

TFRI: Your razor was electric. They *couldn't* get cut.

HF: I'm speaking abstractly. And razor burn is always possible.

TFRI: That's true. How's your musical, *Legs: A True Story*, going?

HF: I love Broadway. It's good to see Bob Goulet make such a comeback playing me. Mom's a big fan, and it reminded her of Pop.

TFRI: I thought he was a doctor.

HF: He danced marathons before he

was Hollywood's chiropodist. His only regret was not working on Elmo Lincoln, the first Tarzan, in his prime. Legendary feet. The only film to do them justice was Griffith's *Intolerance*. He played "The Mighty Man of Valor."

TFRI: Interesting. Have you thought of writing a book?

HF: No, I only write about industrial machinery, and then I translate it into German. That clears my mind. If I write anything else, I start to talk too much, like my writer friends. We take them to operas or tennis. Even then I sometimes see their lips move. As Joan Didion says, writers are always selling somebody out.

TFRI: Are tape recorders? [Pause] Critics notice an art-versus-life dialectic in your work. Is that what you see?

HF: No. Different dialectics. First I see hair as spirit separate from flesh, but reversing Augustine. Then I echo Smithson in his "Science Fiction Fiction and the Art of the Absolute Nothing." After he made *Spiral Jetty*, I hear he found spiral jetties everywhere: fish hooks, helicopter propellers . . .

TFRI: Van Gogh's ear.

HF: Van Gogh's ear, yes. That obsession appears in Warhol's films: Bianca Jagger shaves her armpit. It's posed, and yet, it doesn't seem that posed. [Staring] There's George Segal's *Woman Shaving Her Leg* and *Alice Listening to Her Poetry and Music* . . .

TFRI: She listens to a tape recorder. We keep circling them.

HF: Okay, I'll explain. If you record my voice, you take me, like the peoples who think cameras take souls. [His baritone hints of raspiness. He quit smoking last year.] Peggy had to speak to the press. That's how she met that publicist Sam Peggy, whom she later married. Actually it worked out quite well. [Sam] Peggy and I were able to work out a deal with *People* to do a spread on our [Peggy and Hugh Frank's] unhappy marriage, which was quite similar to the one they did on the happy marriage of Connie Chung and Maury Povich.

TFRI: I see. What function do drawings have in your art?

HF: They went on T-shirts. I needed a confidence-builder after the collapse.

TFRI: You didn't expect that, did you?

HF: No, I thought the shaving project would work like a Busby Berkeley film. Smooth. Instead OSHA threatened to shut me down, and then the women organized. I was on only the eighty-seventh woman, too, and I was so involved I didn't notice that women were stealing buses . . .

TFRI: That truly is a great photograph on the cover of *Newsweek*, when you realized they were leaving. Your expression is hard to describe as anything but despair and disbelief.

HF: Despair and disbelief with a razor. Then Peggy ran off with Peggy. They got a good career out of it, didn't they? Thank God for Stella.

TFRI: Stella Frank, your present wife, was the eighty-seventh woman, the last one you shaved.

HF: Yes. It must have been synchronicity. The problems started when we offered the Utah Jazz basketball team too much money. Even though Frank Layden, the team president and former coach, said no, the women—the grandmothers, the members of the tabernacle choir, the stock brokers—all became enraged. I tried to explain that those players had so much leg—Are you okay? [Steno 2 starts coughing. Frank gets her water.] Stella and I haven't talked much about it, but in *Interview* she says the girls wanted to shave Mark Eaton.

TFRI: Your work seems to criticize the American dream.

HF: Well, I'm the type of guy, if I see Ernie Borgnine on TV holding a goat, I'll watch the whole show. I don't criticize. I point things out. I glorify useless rituals, like that woman who wears an evening gown made of thirty pounds of bologna. But then, one man has a grand theory connecting *Playboy's* airbrushed pubic hair, the *Life* covers of my event and the bra's hundredth anniversary, and Lyndon LaRouche. This guy, who happens to be a minister, poses as an agent for the hosiery companies, advertises for models, and then films them posing. He's survived on that.

TFRI: And what about you? What now?

HF: I'm moving to Hawaii. There's a place between the places owned by the poet Bill Merwin and Jim Nabors that I think I'll enjoy. □

Test driving a Saab won't just change your mind. It could change your life.

Pretend you're from Missouri.

Bring your skepticism to a Saab showroom and let us show you what a Saab is all about.

Let us challenge you with a car like the 900 Turbo shown here. It hauls like a wagon and goes like a rocket. So which is it? It's whichever you need at the moment.

Allow us to startle you

with a car that's built like a block of granite but doesn't handle like one; for five years running, Saabs have ranked best in their class in the Highway Loss Data Institute's survey of injury claim frequency.

Standard ABS brakes and driver's air bags on all 1990 Saabs could make that six years running.

Dare us to alter your views on value. The 900 Turbo,

including Saab's new Roadside Assistance Program, can be yours for about \$25,500*; which is much less money than many European cars that do less. (Saabs are intelligently priced from \$16,995 to \$32,995.)

All these things will change your mind when we show you a Saab. But will owning one change your life? Perhaps.

Perhaps you'll find

yourself driving more often for the fun of it, or going out in weather that used to keep you in (all Saabs have front-wheel drive for terrific traction). At the most you'll feel wonderful; at the least, less skeptical.

Even if you are from Missouri.



The most intelligent cars ever built.

*MSRP: \$25,495, 3 door 5-speed manual, excluding taxes, license, freight, dealer charges and options. Prices subject to change. © 1990 Saab-Scania of America, Inc.



SAAB

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*The techniques and the cartoon-like
moral vision of television advertising are exerting
more and more influence over American
moviemaking*

★ ★ ★



BY MARK CRISPIN MILLER

“THIS APPROACH TO HUMAN BEINGS STRIKES ME AS UTTERLY CYNICAL, and directly contrary to the democratic ideal.” Such was the sharp response of Dr. Lewis Webster Jones, the head of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Other clergymen agreed: this new technique could mean the twilight of democracy. It was not only God’s ministers who sensed a threat. This technique, Aldous Huxley declared, made “nonsense of the

whole democratic procedure, which is based on conscious choice on rational ground.” The public protest was immense. The National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters felt obliged to ban the use of the technique by any of its members, and the three major television networks also publicly rejected it. The New York State Senate unanimously passed a bill outlawing the technique. When KTLA, an independent TV station in Los Angeles, announced that it would soon start using the invention to discourage littering and unsafe driving, the station “received such a torrent of adverse mail,” *Life* magazine reported, “that it cancelled the campaign.”

Meanwhile, there were some who were not emitting “yelps of alarm,” according to *The Wall Street Journal*. Indeed, certain forward-looking managers were rather taken with the idea, despite its dangers, or perhaps because of them. “Chuckles one TV executive with a conscious eye on the future,” *Time* magazine reported in its coverage of the controversy, “It smacks of brainwashing, but of course it would be tempting.”

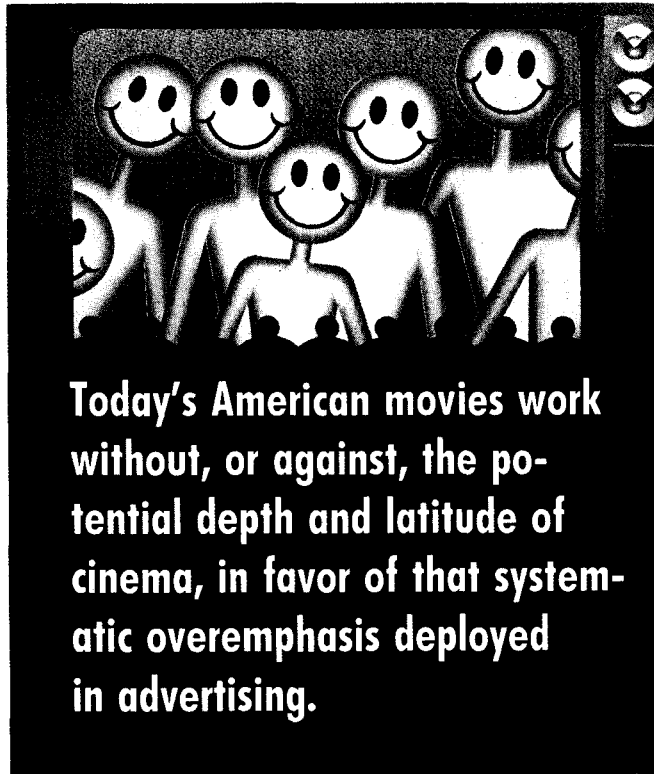
The invention that sparked the national panic, and that was also quietly thrilling certain corporate salesmen, was “subliminal advertising”—a phrase coined by the first of its practitioners, James M. Vicary, “a young moti-

vational researcher and amateur psychologist," as the *Journal* called him. On September 12, 1957, Vicary, the vice-president of the Subliminal Projection Company, held a press conference to tout the results of an experiment that he had just concluded at a neighborhood movie theater in Fort Lee, New Jersey. For six weeks, using special equipment, he had flashed imperceptible allurements onto the screen during the theater's showings of *Picnic*, a Columbia release. Projected every five seconds for one three-thousandth of a second, those unnoticed coaxings, Vicary said, had dramatically boosted concession-stand sales of the items subliminally hyped on the big screen. Vicary had projected two terse bits of copy: "Hungry? Eat popcorn" and "Drink Coca-Cola."

Blatant Impositions

TODAY WHAT MATTERS MOST ABOUT VICARY'S experiment is not his "findings"—which Vicary fabricated. His invention turned out to have had no effect at all on how much Coke or popcorn people swallowed, but was a mere sales gimmick to promote the Subliminal Projection Company itself. Although his "results" were valueless, the outrage stirred by his announcement is important. Back then the rumor that one movie had been temporarily polluted with an advertising pitch—"Drink Coca-Cola"—was enough to elicit a great wave of angry protest. That was in 1957. Let us now look at two clips from movies of the 1980s—movies that nobody protested.

In *Murphy's Romance*, released by Columbia in 1985, Sally Field is a youngish divorcée, poor but plucky, who has just moved with her sweet pre-adolescent son to a friendly little Texas town. At the start of the film she wanders into an old-fashioned drugstore, owned, we soon discover, by James Garner, a very benevolent curmudgeon ("Murphy"). On her way in, Field passes, and so we see (she's moving slowly so that we'll see), not one but *three* bright Coca-Cola signs (the merry red, the bold white script)—one on each front window, one on the front door. And then, as Field plunks herself down cutely at the soda counter, and as the seemingly brusque but



really very kindly Garner comes to serve her, there is the following exchange:

Field: I'll have a banana split. No, I won't. I'll have a Coke.

Garner: A Coke?

Field: A lemon Coke.

Much is later made of Garner's cherished 1927 Studebaker, which sits out front; Garner refuses to put it elsewhere, despite a daily parking ticket. Although this business does say something obvious about Garner's character ("That Murphy! Stubborn as a mule!"), the car's visual function is to say "Drink Coca-Cola," because it shares the frame with, and is the same deep merry red as, those three prominent

Coca-Cola signs. (The movie, incidentally, has a happy ending.)

Toward the beginning of *Who's Harry Crumb?*, a 1989 Columbia release, John Candy sits next to Jim Belushi on a bus. A fantastically inept detective, Candy is on his way to meet his employers in a big kidnapping case. Here, in all its comic brilliance, is the entire scene with Belushi:

Candy (eating cherries, offers one): Cherry?

Belushi (reading): No fruit, thank you.

Candy pulls a can of Diet Coke (silvery cylinder, red block letters) out of his bag.

Candy: Coke?

Belushi: No, thank you.

Candy: Mix 'em together, ya got a cherry Coke. Ah ha ha ha ha ha! A cherry Coke, ha ha ha ha!

Later, dining with his wealthy clients, Candy pours a can of Diet Coke into a brandy snifter full of ice cream, holding the (silvery) can up high so that its (red) name is not just legible but unavoidable.

What is the difference between James Vicary's ploy and these later cinematic tricks to make an audience "Drink Coca-Cola"? In 1957 Vicary tried to boost his business by implanting a commercial message in a Columbia release (and then by making false claims for the failed experiment). In 1982 Coca-Cola bought 49 percent of Columbia Pictures and began at once to plug (its own) products in (its own) movies—trying, just like Vicary, to profit by turning movies into advertising. (The company kept it up until it sold Columbia Pictures to Sony, in

1989.) Certainly there is a difference in degree. Whereas Vicary's method was a furtive imposition on the movie, used in only one theater, and only temporarily, the come-ons embedded in Coke's movies are there forever, in whatever prints or tapes you choose to see, because those messages are worked—overtly—right into the movies' scripts and mise-en-scène.

In this overtness, one might argue, these later exhortations to drink Coca-Cola differ crucially from Vicary's gimmick, because his appeal was "subliminal," whereas the later cans and signs beckon us openly, like illuminated billboards. Such a distinction, however, rests on too crude an understanding of subliminal effects—which result not from invisible implants but from words or images that are, in fact, explicitly presented yet at best only half perceived. These latter-day plugs for Coca-Cola, for example, work as subliminal inducements because their context is ostensibly a movie, not an ad, so that each of them comes sidling toward us dressed up as non-advertising, just as other kinds of ads now routinely come at us disguised as "magalogues" and "advertorials"; rock videos; "educational" broadcasts, newsletters, filmstrips, and posters; concerts, art exhibits, sporting events, magazines, newspapers, books, and TV shows; and a good deal of our daily mail—in short, as anything and everything but advertising.

The subliminal impact of the Coke plugs arises not only from their cinematic camouflage but also from the pleasant welter of associations that in each movie efficiently glamorize every Coca-Cola can or logo: Garner's personal warmth and fine old car, John Candy's would-be riotous antics (and, in each case, the very fact of stardom itself), are attractions serving as oblique (that is, subliminal) enhancements to the all-important product. Precisely because of this benefit Coca-Cola has understandably been very careful in its choice of cinematic vehicles—and has also used them to stigmatize the competition.

In *Murphy's Romance*, Field's nice son goes looking for a job; and while "Coca-Cola" sheds its deep red warmth throughout Murphy's homey store, in a big supermarket where the kid is told abruptly that he isn't needed, two (blue) Pepsi signs loom coldly on the wall like a couple of swastikas. In fact, the company used such tactics before it bought Columbia. In Costa-Gavras's *Missing*, a Universal picture made just before the purchase, Jack Lemmon plays a very decent father searching Chile for his son, who has been kidnapped by Pinochet's soldiers. In one scene this haggard, loyal dad, while talking things out, takes rare (and noticeable) solace in a bottle of Coke—whereas inside the nightmare stadium where the army does its torturing and murdering there stands a mammoth Pepsi machine, towering in this underworld like its dark idol.

Although Pepsico owns no movie studio (yet), its officers began fighting back at once. A special manager tackled the job of keeping Pepsi on the silver screen, and from that moment the spheric Pepsi logo (white/blue/

red) became a film presence almost as prevalent as big handguns. In the movies Pepsi is the choice of a new generation—that is, of every generation. The suburban kids are drinking Pepsi in *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, like the poor kids in *Stand and Deliver* and *Lean on Me*, and like the old folks in *Cocoon: The Return*. Jennifer Beals is drinking Diet Pepsi in *Flashdance*, Kathy Baker is buying Pepsi in *Clean and Sober*, in *Always* a brightly lit Pepsi logo lengthily upstages Holly Hunter, and in *Legal Eagles* Debra Winger keeps her Pepsi cold and blatant in a refrigerator otherwise full of blank containers. Pepsi glides through the Texas of the fifties in *Everybody's All-American*, pops into the cute Manhattan of *Crossing Delancey*, and drops in on Norman Bates's milieu in *Psycho II* and *Psycho III*. And Pepsico, too, has tried to move against its major rival, declining to place a Pepsi ad on the cassette of *Dirty Dancing* unless Vestron, the video company, cut every scene that showed a Coca-Cola sign. Vestron passed. (All these movies have happy endings.)

Product Placement

SUCH SUBLIMINAL TACTICS ARE CERTAINLY NOT PECULIAR to the mighty cola rivals. They are also used today—aggressively—by every other major advertiser. Indeed, cinematic product placement became so common in the eighties that it now sustains a veritable industry. Formerly plugging was a marginal (if common) practice in the movie industry, the result of direct bartering between studio and advertiser. In the eighties the plugging process became "rationalized," as dozens of companies formed to broker deals between advertisers and film producers. Usually the advertisers—and sometimes the studios themselves—keep the brokers on retainer with an annual fee; the advertisers are then charged extra for specific "placements." In return for the plug the advertiser will help defray the ever-rising costs of filmmaking, not only by providing props or costumes but often—and more important—by mounting a tie-in promotional campaign that will sell the movie in many ads, in thousands of bright aisles, on millions of clean boxes.

The arrangement seems to work wonders for the budgets of all concerned. The advertisers love it: "More and more companies now recognize that movies are an alternative advertising and promotional medium," a plugster exults. And this offer is one that financially pressed filmmakers can't refuse. "Obsessed with the bottom line, studios no longer snub promotion tie-ins—much to the delight of marketers eager to reach the last captive media audience," *Incentive* magazine reports. An executive at Walt Disney Pictures and Television says, "Add the magic of movies to a promotion, and you can rise above the clutter to get people's attention."

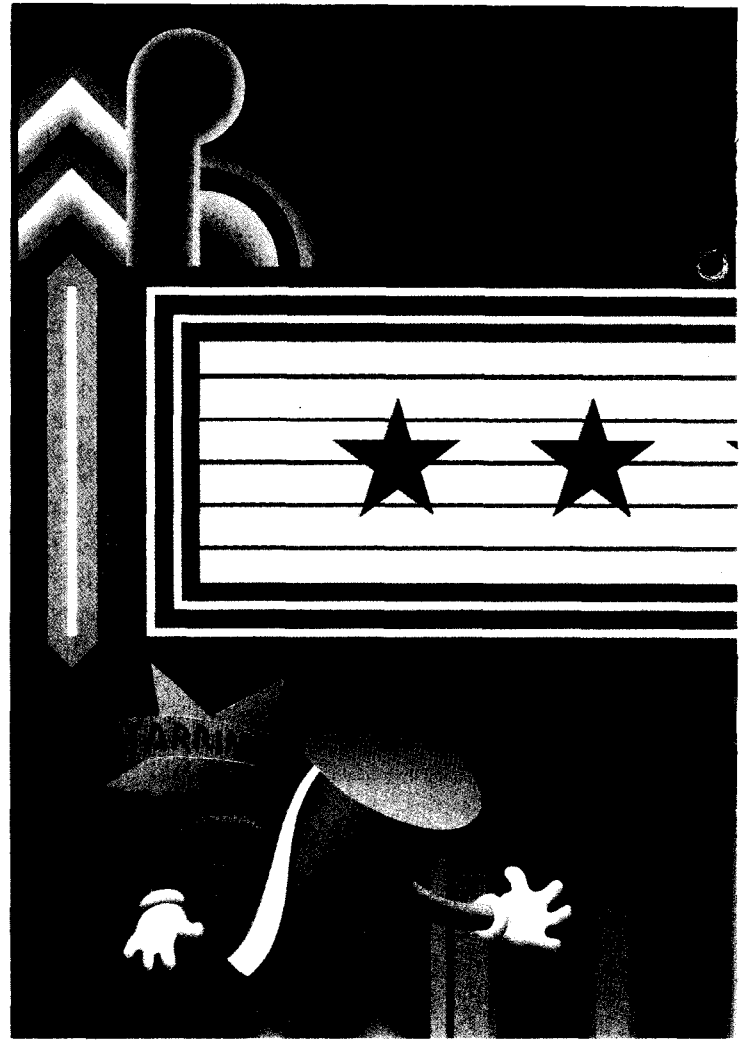
Always in search of the perfectly closed-off setting, advertisers have for decades been eyeing cinema, whose viewers can't flip the page or turn their chairs away. It is

this interest in a captive audience that has the marketers delighting in the movies—which, now crammed with plugs, offer about as much magic as you would find at K-Mart, or at Lord & Taylor. Watching them, there is no way that you “can rise above the clutter,” because they *are* “the clutter.”

Consider one of Sylvester Stallone’s big hits, *Rocky III*, which showcases in passing Coca-Cola, Sanyo, Nike, Wheaties, TWA, Marantz, and Wurlitzer, and—in actual ads within the film (with Rocky, now a big celebrity, as endorser)—Nikon, Harley-Davidson, Budweiser, Maserati, Gatorade, and American Express. Or consider *Over the Top*, a box-office disaster in which Stallone plays a humble trucker who, estranged from his son, must win the lad back by taking first prize in a major arm-wrestling tournament. Even before the opening credits are over, the movie has highlighted Budweiser, Colgate shaving cream, and Michelin tires; and daubed across the side of Stallone’s giant rig is a huge full-color ad for Brut cologne, which shows up grandly in the film’s big landscape shots. (Brut and the film’s producers had a tie-in deal.) Moreover, each of the many arm wrestlers who roar and shudder at the Big Event bears the imprint of some corporate sponsor, so that the movie displays not only Hilton Hotels, TWA, Alpine car stereos, Leaseway Transportation, Nintendo—and Pepsi—but also Volvo and Toyota, Nike and Adidas, and Valvoline, Duracell, Soloflex, and Alka-Seltzer. (Both films have happy endings.)

These are two examples of Hollywood’s new commercialism at its most grotesque, and there are many others—for example, the latest 007 entry, *License to Kill*, in which James Bond ostentatiously smokes Larks, a plug for which Philip Morris paid \$350,000; or *Back to the Future II*, a very loud and manic “romp” that lovingly showcases the futuristic wares of at least a dozen corporate advertisers; or *The Wizard*, a children’s movie that is essentially a long commercial for Nintendo; or, in what may be (you never know) the most glaring case of rampant plugging yet, the children’s movie *MAC & Me*, a shameless *E.T.* knock-off in which a handicapped child befriends an alien, MAC, who lives on Coca-Cola. (In just over a month this movie grossed \$34 million.)

The practice of plugging is just as obvious in movies that do not resemble comic books. Take *Bull Durham*, which begins with the cute rookie pitcher Nuke LaLoosh (Tim Robbins) on the mound, the Pepsi logo plain as day on the outfield wall behind him, its colors reproduced exactly on his uniform. As the film proceeds, it also plugs—repeatedly—Budweiser, Miller, Jim Beam, Oscar Mayer, and a host of Alberto-Culver products. (*Bull Durham* has a happy ending.) Or take *Mr. Mom*, a feeble “issue” comedy about the travails of a green house-husband, which showcases McDonald’s, Domino’s pizza, Terminix exterminators, Folgers coffee, Lite beer, Jack Daniels, Van Camp’s chili, Ban deodorant, Windex, Tide, Spray ‘n Wash, Borax, Clorox 2, and Downy fabric



softener. (*Mr. Mom* has a happy ending.) Or, finally, take *Murphy’s Romance*, which showcases (aside from Coke) Purina, Heinz 57 Steak Sauce, Wesson Oil, Nike, Huggies, Vanish toilet-bowl cleaner, Fuji film, and Miller beer. There are also *two* bottles of Ivory Liquid at Sally Field’s kitchen sink, and at one point she asks James Garner, “Could I have two Extra-Strength Tylenol and a glass of water, please?” At another point she shouts enticingly, “Campbell’s tomato soup!”

Such bald intrusions into dialogue are no longer rare. Usually the spoken plug comes in the form of a casual request: “Want a Coke?” Eliot asks E.T. “Gimme a Pepsi Free,” Michael J. Fox tells the soda jerk in *Back to the Future*—and since they didn’t have that choice back in 1955, the jerk’s snide retort is really funny. To the advertisers, such a soft gag is ideal, especially if it quotes an established piece of copy. For instance, in *Vice Versa*, one of the late 1980s’ several comedies about adults and children swapping bodies, the apparent child, in line at the school cafeteria, betrays his inner maturity in this way: “I don’t suppose you have any Grey Poupon?” (All these movies have happy endings.)



TV PROGRAMS, ROUTINELY INTERRUPTED BY PURE ads, need not themselves display the labels quite so often, or so dramatically (although they do display them). American movies nonetheless have a television counterpart: Brazilian soap operas, a daily spectacle in which the products play so large a role that some multinationals, among them Coca-Cola, sign annual contracts with Brazil's largest television network, TV Globo, to keep their products constantly written into the shows' ongoing "stories." Down there in Rio the practice, which the Brazilians call by the English word "merchandising," is defended just as Hollywood defends the practice here—by attesting to its powerful naturalism. "Most soap operas are about daily life in which people go shopping and drive cars and drink beer," TV Globo's head of product placement says. "That's why it is so natural." Likewise, a Hollywood plugster argues that since films "are pushing more toward reality," plugging is imperative: "A can that says 'Beer' isn't going to make it any more."

In a few recent movies—the eerie satire *Heathers*, the exquisite *Drugstore Cowboy*—the subtle use of products

does make the fictive milieu more believable than generic items would. Usually, however, product placement does not seem natural at all but is deliberately *anti-realistic*: its sole purpose is to enhance the product by meticulously placing it within the sort of idealized display that occurs nowhere in real life but everywhere in advertising—which is itself just such display. In the world as advertised, the label or logo always shines forth like the full moon, whereas in our world, where "people go shopping and drive cars and drink beer," the crucial symbols reach us (if at all) with none of that sudden startling clarity—for the very ubiquity of advertising has paradoxically also worked to hide it from us. To live the daily life in which people go shopping is to be bombarded into numbness; and it is this stupefaction that movie plugs, like advertising proper, have been devised to penetrate.

As such plugs are anti-realistic, so also are they anti-narrative, for the same movie-glow that exalts each product high above the clutter of the everyday also lifts it out of, and thereby makes it work against, the movie's story. Even when half turned toward us, coquettishly, or placed in some marginal position, the crucial can or box or bottle

Why reforming our liability America is to succeed

EXCESSIVE LIABILITY AWARDS MAKE IT TOUGH FOR U.S. COMPANIES TO COMPETE.

We are a compassionate society. We want to compensate those who have suffered.

But when our courts expand traditional concepts of liability, causing defendants to pay excessive compensation, we're adding to the costs we all pay for goods and services. We're encouraging companies to stop research and development on new products. And we're even making it harder for U.S. companies to compete overseas.

PAYING A HIDDEN TAX.

In reality, the American system of liability has become the source of a hidden tax on our economy—a tax that can account for as much as 50% of the price paid for a product.

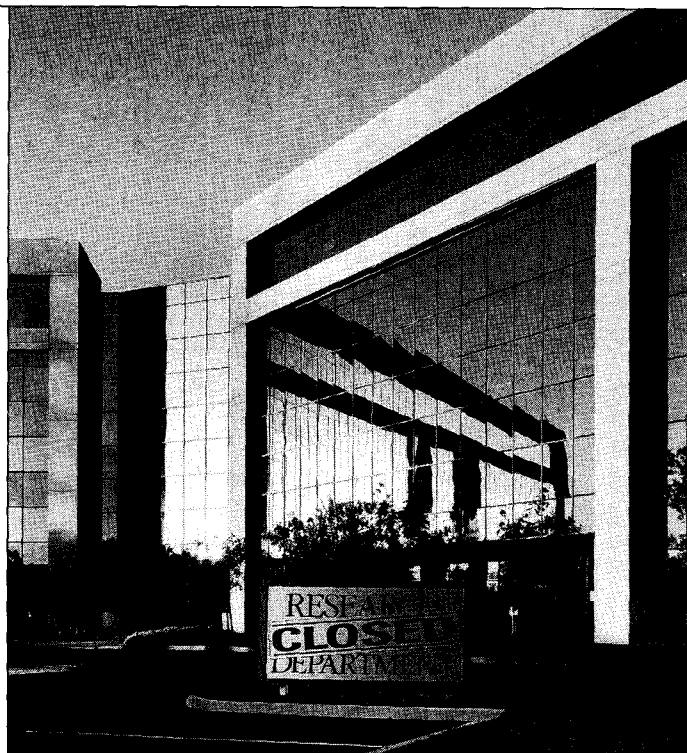
What's worse, it has been estimated that this hidden tax amounts to \$80 billion a year—a sum equal to the combined profits of the nation's 200 largest corporations.

Our economic competitors' legal systems do not encourage litigation to the extent we do. Consider, for example, that there are 30 times more lawsuits per capita in the U.S. than in Japan.

Is it any wonder that America is having a tough time competing in overseas markets?

UNCERTAINTY STIFLES ENTERPRISE.

The unpredictability of our liability system is also enormously costly to American competitiveness. For example, in a recent survey of CEOs, the Conference Board found that worry about potential liability lawsuits caused 47% of firms surveyed to discontinue one or more product lines. In addition, 25% stopped certain product research and development, and 39% decided against introduc-



ing a new product. Meanwhile, our overseas competitors continue to research and develop new products at an ever-increasing pace.

ARE WE CONTROLLING RISKS OR INCREASING THEM?

When we give a drunk driver the right to sue an automaker or highway engineer for a million dollars after a crash, are we controlling risk?

Or just encouraging risky and careless behavior?

If you are a manufacturer, you can be sued even if your product has state-of-the-art safety features. Even if your customer misused it against your instructions. Even if the risks of misuse were obvious.

When fear of lawsuits causes physicians to limit services to patients—or worse, abandon their prac-

liability system is essential if in overseas markets.

tice altogether—lack of adequate medical treatment means greater risks for everyone.

Is this controlling risk or increasing it?

It's an unhealthy and dangerous situation that needs correcting.

WE MUST REFORM OUR "DEEP POCKETS" APPROACH TO LIABILITY.

Specifically, we need to change our approach and base liability suits on fault.

Our current system often encourages the frivolous suing of those with the ability to pay—in other words, those with "deep pockets." But does it make sense to hold such parties entirely liable, even if they were only minimally at fault?

A MORE RATIONAL APPROACH.

Those who suffer economic losses because of another party's negligence should be fairly reimbursed. No one could argue with this principle. There should also be just compensation for pain and suffering resulting from real and severe injuries.

But can we afford to continue a system that encourages litigation and financial judgements bearing little direct relationship to fault or to the actual cost of injuries suffered?

Clearly, a better approach is needed.

CONGRESS HAS A ROLE.

Legislation providing a uniform product liability standard would allow American companies to compete without the burdens of excessive liability risks. And this would unclog the courts and put American business in a stronger position as barriers to international trade and investment fall.

There is proposed legislation before Congress

dealing with these issues. A solution to the liability crisis is vital to American competitiveness, and Congress can play a role in restoring the right balance.

SO DO THE COURTS.

When all is said and done, our courts are the interpreters of our laws and our values. It's our values as a society that count, especially as reflected in the courts and individual jury decisions.

Together our legislative and judicial branches must recognize the damage being done to American competitiveness from the current liability system. And help America restore the proper balance.

WHY IS AIG RUNNING ADS LIKE THIS?

AIG (American International Group) is the largest underwriter of commercial and industrial insurance in America, and the leading U.S.-based international insurance organization.

Since we deal every day with issues affecting the future of the world economy, it's understandable that we champion reform designed to strengthen American business's competitive stance in global markets.

Perhaps you'll want to keep the ball rolling by contacting your elected officials—judges and legislators—with your own views.

Or if you prefer, write M.R. Greenberg, Chairman, AIG, 70 Pine Street, New York, NY 10270.

AIG World leaders in insurance
and financial services.

tends (as it were) to make a scene. An expert rhetorical missile in the first place, and with its force enhanced a thousandfold by advertising, the product cannot even sneak by without distracting us at least a little, its vivid, pleasant features calling, "Hey! It's me!"

And when shoved right into the spotlight, the product doesn't just upstage the actors but actually stops the narrative. In *Uncle Buck*, John Candy appears sitting on a sofa, holding a big box of Kellogg's Frosted Flakes at his side, as prominent and boldly hued as an armorial shield—and on that sight the camera lingers. At such a moment the loud package wipes out its co-stars and surroundings, becoming the only thing we notice. (*Uncle Buck* has a happy ending.)

The rise of product placement has, however, damaged movie narrative not only through the shattering effect of individual plugs but also—more profoundly—through the partial transfer of creative authority out of the hands of filmmaking professionals and into the purely quantitative universe of the CEOs. All the scenes, shots, and lines mentioned above represent the usurpation by advertising of those authorial prerogatives once held by directors and screenwriters, art directors and set designers—and by studio heads, who generally cared about how their films were made, whereas the managers now in charge are thinking only of their annual reports. "Hollywood has changed," says Ed Meyer, of the ad agency Saatchi & Saatchi DFS Compton. "Unlike the old days, the bankers and M.B.A.s are calling the shots."

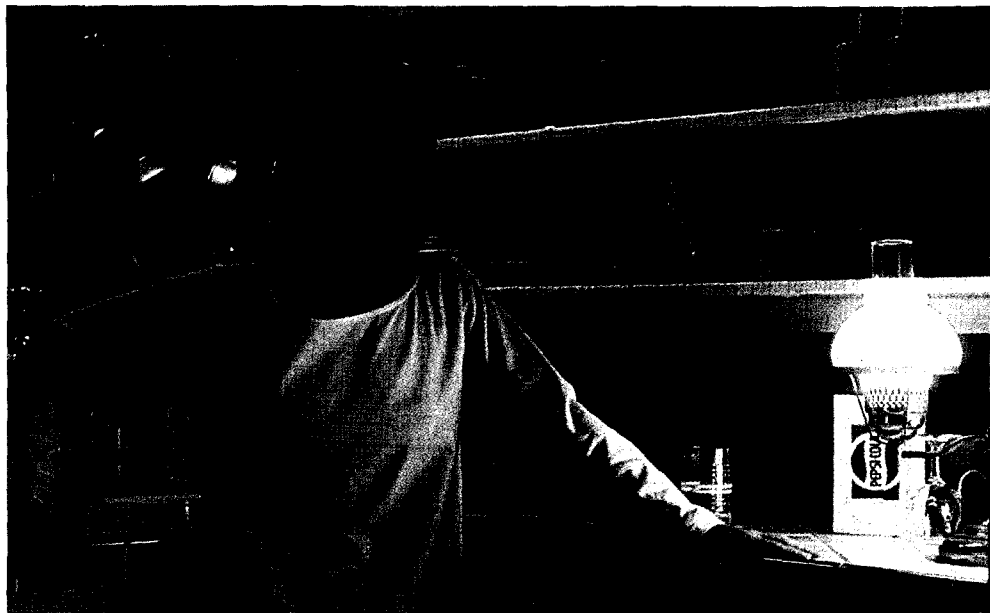
Thus the basic decisions of filmmaking are now often made, indirectly, by the advertisers, who are focused only on a movie's usefulness for pushing products. Take the case of costume designers, who have often in the eighties been displaced by "promo-costuming"—an arrangement that, according to *Premiere* magazine, either showcases

the wares of name designers (Oscar de la Renta did *Bright Lights*, *Big City*, Giorgio Armani did *The Untouchables*) or, more frequently, "involves manufacturers of such branded staples as jeans and sneakers, which have visible logos that make them much easier to promote." In 1987, for example, Adidas shod and clad many of the characters in some sixty movies.

The plugging process is as thorough and exacting as the work of those professionals whose skill it has long since superseded. The pre-production effort is exhaustive: "Friendly producers," *The Wall Street Journal* reports, "send scripts to [Associated Film Promotions] weeks and even months before filming starts, and the company analyzes them scene by scene to see if it can place a product—or advertising material, a billboard perhaps—on, under or behind the stars." While the advertisers may not be as idealistic about movies as, say, David O. Selznick, they are just as dictatorial: "We choose projects where we have maximum control," says one plugster. "We break a film down and tell the producers exactly where we want to see our clients' brands."

Such subordination of the movie is essential to plugging, which is based on the assumption that the movie will in no way contradict—will, indeed, do nothing but enhance—the product's costly, all-important aura. The plug, in other words, must not just "foreground" the crucial name or image but also flatter it—that is, brightly reaffirm the product's advertising. When its brokers argue that plugging enhances realism, they are implying that reality is only where the products mean just what their advertising says they mean: "power" or "safety" or "old-fashioned goodness."

Now and then in the eighties an American movie has invoked products critically, or at least in a way that is poetically telling and not just promotional. In Garry Mar-



Always, *Uncle Buck*, and *About Last Night* . . . (clockwise from the left): "the product doesn't just upstage the actors but actually stops the narrative."

shall's *Nothing in Common*, a surprisingly grim and moving (if uneven) comedy about a successful young adman (Tom Hanks) and his dying scoundrel of a father (Jackie Gleason), the same product appears in two shots—not to sell it but as a chilling metaphysical implication and a visual hint that father and son, despite their mutual loathing and antithetical life-styles, are fundamentally alike. Placed casually in each man's kitchen—the one tidy and state-of-the-art, the other bare and slovenly—is a box of the same cereal: Life. (*Nothing in Common* does not have a happy ending.)

Such dark suggestiveness is precisely what advertisers do not want, and so they, or their brokers, will back away from any movie that might somehow cast a shadow on their advertising. For advertisers are obsessed not just with selling their own specific images but also with universalizing the whole hermetic ambience for selling itself—the pseudo-festive, mildly jolting, ultimately tranquilizing atmosphere of TV and its bright epiphenomena, the theme park and the shopping mall.

Crossovers

EVEN IF, ARMED WITH SOME MARVELOUS ZAPPING gizmo, you could sit and blast away every obvious product as it passed through the frame or glowed in close-up, today's Hollywood movie would still seem like an ad. This is in part because movies now tend to look and sound a lot like TV commercials, as if the major film schools were teaching not, say, the best movies out of Warner Brothers but the latest campaign by the Saatchi brothers. Like ads, movies now tend to have a perfectly coordinated total look, as if they'd been designed rather than directed—a tendency so marked, in some cases, that the movie and some well-known ad can hardly be distinguished. Thus *The Color Purple*, with its lush score, hazy golden images, and long climactic round of teary hugs, leaves you thinking not that you should read the novel but that you really ought to call your mother ("Reach out—"), while the parodic *Raising Arizona* uses precisely the same wide-angle distortion and hyped-up, deadpan acting that Joe Sedelmaier used in his famous ads for Federal Express ("When it absolutely, positively—"), while *Top Gun*, the blockbuster salute to navy fliers, is in its action sequences identical to those spectacular commercials that allured the young with "It's Not Just a Job: It's an Adventure!" or (yes!) "Be All You Can Be!"—expert recruitment propaganda that was probably well known to the film's director, Tony Scott, who came to the movie business as a famed director of TV ads, most notably for Diet Pepsi. (These three movies leave you feeling good.)

Such crossovers are the usual thing in today's media industry, many of whose filmmakers learned their craft (and continue to work) in TV advertising. Ten years ago a stellar group of such professionals migrated from the ad

shops of London to the studios of Hollywood, where they helped to alter modern cinema. Like his brother Tony (who, the year after *Top Gun*, directed the repetitious *Beverly Hills Cop 2*), Ridley Scott is a prolific ad-maker, most notably for Chanel, W. R. Grace, and Apple Computer. He is also the auteur of the inspired and nauseating *Alien*; the brilliant *Blade Runner*; a thriller designed, as if by computer, to stroke lonely women, *Someone to Watch Over Me*; and finally the unforgivable *Black Rain*. The ad-maker Hugh Hudson has turned out such gorgeous, empty films as *Chariots of Fire* and *Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan, Lord of the Apes*. Having made hundreds of short ads, Adrian Lyne came to Hollywood and made such ad-like films as *Flashdance*, *9½ Weeks*, and also the gynophobic crowd-pleaser *Fatal Attraction*. Alan Parker, whose films include *Midnight Express*, *Fame*, and *Mississippi Burning*, is easily the most successful of the British émigrés, because the most adept at stirring our worst impulses. Many American ad-makers have also become filmmakers, including Stan Dragoti, the director of the "I Love New York" ads and the plug-ridden *Mr. Mom*; Howard Zieff, the director of Alka-Seltzer's "Spicy Meatball" ad and the incoherent *Private Benjamin*; and Joe Pytko, the director of numerous Pepsi ads and the deadly race-track comedy *Let It Ride*.

Meanwhile, as more and more admen direct films, more and more filmmakers are directing television ads—simply in order to keep working, now that the huge costs of moviemaking have made it nearly impossible to get a project going. Directors can no longer afford to scorn the sixty-second pitch: "There was a stigma in the past," Jerry Bernstein, the head of the Association of Independent Commercial Producers, observed in 1988. "The feeling was [that the ad] was not a great art form." That feeling is passé, if not extinct, now that Robert Altman, Martin Scorsese (Armani), Federico Fellini, Jean-Luc Godard, Francis Ford Coppola (Fuji), John Frankenheimer, John Badham, Tony Bill (Bud Light), John Schlesinger, David Lynch, Penny Marshall (Revlon), David Steinberg, Stephen Frears, and Errol Morris (7-Eleven), among others, are making ads. Cinematographers, too, have turned to advertising: Sven Nykvist, Nestor Almendros, Gordon Willis, Eric Saarinen, and Vilmos Zsigmond, among others. And filmmakers have even been doing celebrity turns in ads: Richard Donner for Amaretto di Saronno, George Lucas for Panasonic (in Japan), Bernardo Bertolucci for Pioneer, Spike Lee for the Gap, and for Nike (which he plugs throughout his movies) in a commercial that he also directed.

If movies look like ads, then, the transformation may owe something to this exchange of personnel—which delights the powers of advertising, who want their ads to look like movies (so that the restless TV viewer won't zap them). "Advertisers and agencies want their commercials designed with the look of the hottest features," one ad producer says. Crossovers have helped erase the old dis-

tinctions between movies and commercials: "The two disciplines—feature films and commercial films—have blended together to the point now where it's just filmmaking," says a senior vice-president at the ad agency DDB Needham, in Chicago. It might seem that through this convergence each "discipline" would somehow benefit the other—but in the era of the VCR it is advertising that has affected cinema, and not the other way around. Now that most movies are produced with an eye toward their eventual re-release on videocassette for the home audience, and now that TV, moreover, has induced a universal taste for TV's pace and tone, the new "filmmaking" takes its lead primarily from those who create the small screen's most hypnotic images. "There's not a good filmmaker alive who doesn't look to us for inspiration," Bob Giraldi, the director of ad spots for GE, Sperry Rand, McDonald's, Miller Lite, and many other corporations, claimed in 1984.

Grabbers

JUST AS THE PRODUCT PLUG HALTS OR WEAKENS THE movie narrative, so has this general drift toward ad technique drastically reduced the movies' narrative potential, for cinematic narrative works through a range of visual conventions or devices, and the recent rise of ad technique has all but wiped out that earlier diversity, coarsening a various and nuanced form into a poundingly hypnotic instrument—a mere *stimulus*, and an ugly one at that.

There is, first, the all-important difference in scale. "This is just like doing a small feature," Ridley Scott assured his crew on the set of a Pepsi ad in 1984. "I see commercials as short films," Adrian Lyne told *Advertising Age* in 1985. But to suggest that commercials are just like movies, only smaller (in both space and time), is to negate the crucial ground of cinematic art: an expansive visual field, broad enough to imply a world beyond, behind, more varied than, the glamorous item in mid-frame. TV is, to say the least, different. Watching *The Last Emperor* on your set is like trying to survey the Sistine Chapel ceiling by peeping at it through a toilet-paper roll. TV, however, has reduced the movies not just by putting blinders on the viewers of wide-screen epics but also by establishing a compositional norm of close-ups, two-shots, and other setups whereby the action is (just as in advertising) repetitiously *foregrounded*.

Such is now the norm of cinema. Today there are few scenes shot in deep focus (as in Renoir and Welles, *Vertigo* and *The Godfather Part II*, or, for that matter, *The Night of the Living Dead*). Likewise, we rarely see the kind of panoramic composition that once allowed a generous impression of quasi-global simultaneity, as (most elaborately) in the movies of Robert Altman and Jacques Tati, and that also, more subtly, enriches the frame in most great movies, whose makers have offered *pictures*, composed of

pleasurable "touches" and legible detail. These moving tableaux often, as André Bazin argued, gave their viewers some choice, and required some (often minimal) interpretive attention. Only now and then, and in films that don't come out of Hollywood—Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*, Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket*—do we perceive such exhilarating fullness. In contrast, today's American movies work without, or against, the potential depth and latitude of cinema, in favor of that systematic overemphasis deployed in advertising and all other propaganda. Each shot presents a content closed and unified, like a fist, and makes the point right in your face: big gun, big car, nice ass, full moon, a chase (great shoes!), big crash (blood, glass), a lobby (doorman), sarcasm, drinks, a tongue, pugilistic kiss (nice sheets!), and so on.

Thus today's movie not only foregrounds but also serializes, for just as TV's narrowness has superannuated deep focus and the movies' (sometime) lateral complexity, so has the speedy pace of TV's ads superannuated most of cinema's earlier transitional devices. As John Frankenheimer (*The Manchurian Candidate*, Fiat, AT&T) told *Advertising Age* in 1988, "No longer do films use the fade to black and the slow dissolve the way they used to." This laconic, and correct, observation hints at a grievous cinematic loss, because the fade and the dissolve are no quaint old movie mannerisms. Rather, the dissolve is a succinct and often beautiful means of conveying the passage of time or the onset of a memory; although it has no exact linguistic counterpart, to drop it from the movies would be somewhat like dropping the past tense from verbal language. The fade to black works like a curtain to cover some event too painful or intimate for exhibition, or as a means of conveying loss of consciousness, or as a somber sort of visual cadence, a way of saying, "It's over: now consider what you've seen." In today's ad-saturated "filmmaking" these devices not only seem too slow but are, in different ways, too suggestive of mortality for the movies' bright mall atmosphere, and so they have been dumped in favor of that most basic of connectives, the simple cut, the overuse of which has helped transform the movies into ad-like serial displays.

Such displays show us nothing—not only because each image in the series is as unambiguous as a brand-new belt but also because the serial rush itself is mesmerizing, and so it blinds us to the flashing items that compose it. Large, stark, and fast, the mere contrast stuns us pleasantly—a response that is, as it were, subvisual, as the ad-makers know very well. Thus both marketing and advertising always aim directly at the lowest levels of the mass (that is, your) brain, seeking a reaction that is not just "positive" but unconscious and immediate. Although the pillars of the ad world still use the word "persuasion" to (mis)represent their business, the whole selling project now depends on moves that are less rhetorical than neurological: "Color goes immediately to the psyche and can be a direct sales stimulus," one typical pack-

BACARDI BURSTS VODKA'S BUBBLE IN TASTE TEST.

And we did it in head-to-head competition.

We went directly to vodka & tonic drinkers, in vodka's top ten markets. And in a blind taste test, more than half of them chose the taste of Bacardi® rum & tonic over their usual vodka & tonic.

Amazing? Not really, when you consider how the smooth, lively character of Puerto Rican rum goes so well with the bubbly refreshment of tonic.

So make your own taste test. And see how the taste of Bacardi rum & tonic makes small potatoes of vodka.



Bacardi rum. Made in Puerto Rico.



RUMS OF PUERTO RICO

age designer says. Such blithe and simplistic Pavlovianism is wholly characteristic of the ad-makers and marketers, who like it when we respond without even knowing it, much less knowing why. Thus Philip Dusenberry, of the ad agency BBDO, in New York, claims to have learned (from making Pepsi ads) "that it wasn't important that the viewer read every scene—just that they get the impact of the message."

That last remark could as easily apply to the movies, which now, like advertising, rely heavily if not exclusively on techniques that work directly on the nervous system. Of course, the movies have always used gratuitous tricks to keep viewers riveted: pointless close-ups of a baby's smile to get the women cooing, martial music to tense up the men, sad violins to get the whole house sniffling. Indeed, some of cinema's basic rhetorical devices, it could be argued, are inherently non-narrative, sub-visual: crosscutting for suspense, say, or the weepy reaction shot (which moves the viewers to weep). The point, however, is not that such tricks are new but that they are now all-important—for their power has been fantastically augmented by computer science, Dolby sound, great strides forward in the art of mock mayhem, and other technological advances.

Music, for example, has long been overused by Hollywood, as James Agee noted in 1945. Watching John Huston's war documentary *San Pietro*, which he admired immensely, Agee found it "as infuriating to have to fight off the emotional sales pressure of the Mormon Choir as it would be if all the honored watches and nasal aphrodisiacs insisted on marketing themselves against a Toscanini broadcast." At its pushiest, movie music "weakens the emotional imagination both of maker and onlooker, and makes it virtually impossible to communicate or receive ideas. It sells too cheaply and far too sensually all the things it is the business of the screen itself to present."

Watching the movies that Agee found overscored, most people now would probably agree with him, since the aesthetic errors of the past are easy to laugh at decades later. What may be less obvious today is the persistent relevance of Agee's argument, for the movies have, as visual events, been largely devastated by their "music"—a vast and irresistible barrage of synthesized sound, a hyper-rhythmic full-body stimulus far more effective, and a whole lot louder, than the old choral yawpings or symphonic sweeps that now seem so corny. Starting somewhere out there and back to the left, the "music" thrums and zooms and jumps and jangles right on through you, clearing out your head with such efficiency that not only is it impossible to receive ideas but the whole movie, once over, seems to have gone in one ear and out the other—except that it's not just your head that has functioned as a throughway but every vital organ.

It is the Dolby system, sometimes enhanced by George Lucas's more recent THX Sound System, that gives the music such prostrating force. Even on cassette,

however, the music works an antivisual effect (just as it does throughout TV's shows and ads), imposing an upbeat mood on images that are, per se, so mundane that they would bore or even depress you if the music weren't there telling you to dance. In *St. Elmo's Fire*, Emilio Estevez drives off in a car, and the music makes it sound as if he's just won gold at the Olympics. At the end of *Private Benjamin*, Goldie Hawn walks down a lonely road, and the score exults as if she were attending her own coronation. (Both those movies have happy endings.)

More and more, the movies' very images are also—paradoxically—nonvisual, because, like the music, they try to force our interest or reaction through a visceral jolt that stuns the mind and shuts the eyes. Some of the movies' latest grabbers are very old, like the gooey close-up of some wondering baby ("Awwwww!"), a device no less sickening in *Ghostbusters II* (1989) than it was in *Bachelor Daddy* (1941). Generally, however, the latest grabbers are more technologically sophisticated and (a lot) more violent than those sentimental moments—and far more commonplace, now that movie narrative has been supplanted by such blinding jabs.

As special effects have since *Star Wars* become more mind-blowing and yet more believable, they have also grown more important to the spectacle—and have changed in tone. In many instances the effects now *are* the movie, whether it's *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* or *A Nightmare on Elm Street 3*, films you can sleep through for twenty minutes without then having to ask, "What did I miss?" And as the effects have become the whole show, they have ceased to represent some ambiguous looming force, uncanny or apocalyptic—as they did in the first *King Kong*, *The Day the Earth Stood Still*, and *2001: A Space Odyssey*—and have instead become the tools for a light show that both stimulates and reassures, like fireworks on the Fourth.

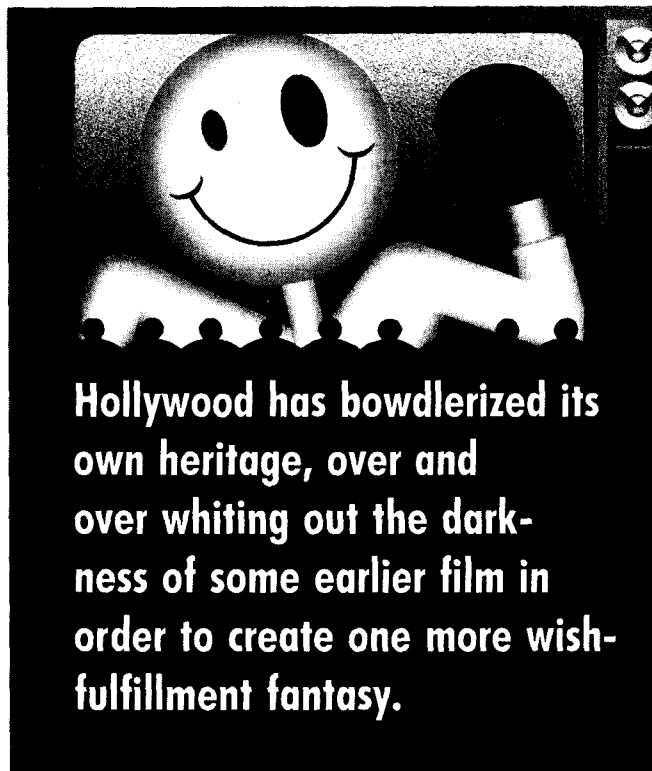
In other words, whereas the effects were once used by and large to fake some scary threat to all humanity, they now routinely fake, in one way or another, someone's annihilation—and it is *good*. The wipe-out might be violent, as at the end of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, when the Nazis are melted down or shriveled up by the wrathful ark light, or as in the horror movies, where, say, Jason burns, zaps, and mangles several teens, until some teen burns or zaps or mangles Jason. Whether the killing force is righteous or demonic, the spectacle of its, his, or her destructiveness or destruction invites your rapt gaze of wondering assent, just like those movies that present the wipe-out as a sweet translation into outer space (that is, heaven): *E.T.*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *Cocoon*, *Cocoon: The Return*—films whose (grateful) characters finally disappear into the all-important light show, just like the films themselves.

For all their visual sophistication, these effects are meant to move us beyond, or back from, visual experience, by either having us nearly *feel* those razors rake that

throat or having us *feel* as if we, too, were dissolving in a celestial bath of light. The same kind of experience—antivisual, non-narrative—is commonplace even in films that have no supernatural or “alien” component. In the eighties the car chase, for instance, became the movies’ main story substitute, offering the illusion of dreamlike forward speed and the gratifying sight, sound, and feeling of machinery bucking, squealing, blowing up—elements that have become so frequent that to catalogue them here would fill a page, since they compose whole sections not only of the cop films (*The Presidio*, *Cobra*, the two *Lethal Weapons*, the two *Beverly Hills Cops*, *Red Heat*) but also of many comedies, even ones that didn’t need such filler (*Midnight Run*, *The Blues Brothers*, *Throw Momma From the Train*). The pleasure here is not visual but physically empathic—the centrifugal tug, that pleasing *crash!*: mock thrills that have only gotten punchier and more elaborate as the car stuff has become routine. Likewise, screen violence in general, a relentless story substitute, has become both commonplace and often horribly sadistic. (The movies named in the above two paragraphs all have happy endings.)

The Imperative of Violence

THE EMPATHIC FUNCTION OF TODAY’S SCREEN violence has changed the character of movie heroics. In *Bullitt* (1968) and *The French Connection* (1971), in *The Searchers* (1956), and in the movies of Sam Peckinpah, the violence, however graphic, was muted by a deep ambivalence that shadowed even the most righteous-seeming acts of vengeance, and that therefore suppressed the viewer’s urge to join in kicking. In contrast, screen violence now is used primarily to invite the viewer to enjoy the *feel* of killing, beating, mutilating. This is most obvious in the slasher films, in which the camera takes the stalking murderer’s point of view, but the same empathic project goes on throughout the genres. There is no point to Rambo’s long climactic rage, or *Cobra*’s, or Chuck Norris’s, other than its open invitation to *become him* at that moment—to ape that sneer of hate, to feel the way it feels to stand there tensed



Hollywood has bowdlerized its own heritage, over and over whitening out the darkness of some earlier film in order to create one more wish-fulfillment fantasy.

up with the Uzi. The hero’s inner kinship with the villain used to seem uncanny, as in Hitchcock’s and Fritz Lang’s movies, and in Clint Eastwood’s excellent *Tightrope*—whereas Stallone’s *Cobra* gets a charge out of being *exactly* like the psychopaths he chases, just as we are meant to feel *exactly* like him.

Moreover, it is not just the overt paeans to machismo that thus incite us but also films that seem politically unlike, say, *Rambo III*—and like *Mississippi Burning*. Hailed for having a plot based on a key event in the history of the civil-rights movement, it actually has no plot, nor is it even slightly faithful to that history. The movie

is, in fact, nothing more than one long grabber. After an hour of watching white trash inflict atrocities on helpless blacks (and a nice white woman), we watch the kick-ass Gene Hackman argue hotly with his FBI superior, the tight-assed Willem Dafoe, who has from the outset rebutted Hackman’s vigilantist urgings with the boring creed of rules and regulations. They fight at length (shouts, punches; a gun is even pulled)—and then, suddenly, Dafoe just up and *changes*: “New rules. We nail ’em any way we can. Even your way.” This absolute reversal, although absurd in terms of character, makes sense rhetorically, since it’s now time to have the three of us (audience, Dafoe, Hackman) all fold into Hackman, who is thereby freed to punish all those ugly rednecks in the ugliest of ways—crushing their testicles, threatening them with castration, maiming them with straight razors, and otherwise permitting “us” to act, through him, just like the Klansmen we presumably detest, while the blacks remain helpless throughout. (*Mississippi Burning* has a happy ending.)

Over and over, conventional narrative requirements are broken down by the imperative of violence—which need not be inflicted by “us,” through the movie’s hero, but is just as often used *against* us, by the movie’s anti-hero, for what matters above all, it seems, is that we feel the stimulus. Thus we are victimized by the “sight” of the vampires in *The Lost Boys* biting off bright red gobbets of their victims’ heads (“Ow!”), and by the sight and sound of the good guy having his fingers broken (*Blade Runner*, *Blue Thunder*) or receiving a ballistic kick between the legs (*Shoot the Moon*, *Black Moon Rising*). Likewise, the

movies now more than ever shock us with the old nonvisual trick of going "Boo!"—a crude startler once used mainly in horror films but now recurring in thriller after thriller (and often heightened by the deep "lub-dub-lub-dub" that simulates your fearful heartbeat).

The primacy of stimulation has, in short, made the movies increasingly cartoonlike. In the cartoon world nothing stands between the wish to look at violence and the enactment of that violence: no demands of plot or character, no physical limitations (space, gravity), no mortality. Ingeniously, and with cruel wit, the cartoon presents a universe wherein the predatory are punished again and again for their appetite by the very hills and trees, the doors and crockery. Full of rage and purpose, those victim-predators get nowhere, and yet never die, pushing on forever, despite the anvils falling on their heads, the steamrollers flattening their bodies out like giant pancakes, the cannonballs caroming down their throats—torments at once severe and harmless, and which occur exclusively because we want to see them happen.

It is not just *Batman* and *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* that invoke the cartoon but all those movies that present a universe wherein the stimulus is gross, never-ending, and immediate, the human "characters" appearing just as easily tormentable, and yet (usually) as indestructible, as Wile E. Coyote or Yosemite Sam. Thus *Lethal Weapon II*, which begins with the old Looney Tunes theme playing

over the familiar Warner Brothers logo, includes several scenes in which Mel Gibson casually brutalizes Joe Pesci—squeezing his badly injured nose, for instance. And thus in *Dragnet*, as a car runs over Dan Ackroyd's feet there is a sound as of the crushing of a bag of walnuts, and Ackroyd pales and winces. And thus Jason, although dead, keeps coming back to life, like Freddy Krueger, like Michael Myers, and, for that matter, like the dead ballplayers in *Field of Dreams*, like the vanished old folks in *Cocoon: The Return*, like the dead E.T.—all of them coming back forever and ever, because the cartoon always has a happy ending.

Surplus Wish Fulfillment

THE CONVERGENCE OF THE MOVIES WITH BOTH ads and cartoons makes sense, because the ad and the cartoon each present a fantasy of perfect wish fulfillment: that is, wish fulfillment that seems both immediate and absolute, arising, on the one hand, from a purchase (which will make life perfect now) or, on the other hand, from the animated spectacle itself (in which the universe appears responsive to one's wishes). This effect has been compounded in the movies, which now purvey a wish-fulfillment fantasy as extreme as, and far more compelling than, any Coke spot or Tom and Jerry free-for-all.

THE GOATS OF SUMMER

The clink of steel diggers rammed
on sandstone makes pet goats easy to despise.
Without a fence, they'd baaa and billy leap
wet fields of oats or cotton, nothing sacred

to their hooves and nibbling lips.
Leaning the diggers in a hole of stubborn rock,
I wipe a wet bandana on my face
and sling my Stetson like a watering can.

Standing still at noon, I feel my boot soles burn.
What madness made me believe the silly song
of barkers selling goats, kids for kids,
the catchy phrase erasing the smell

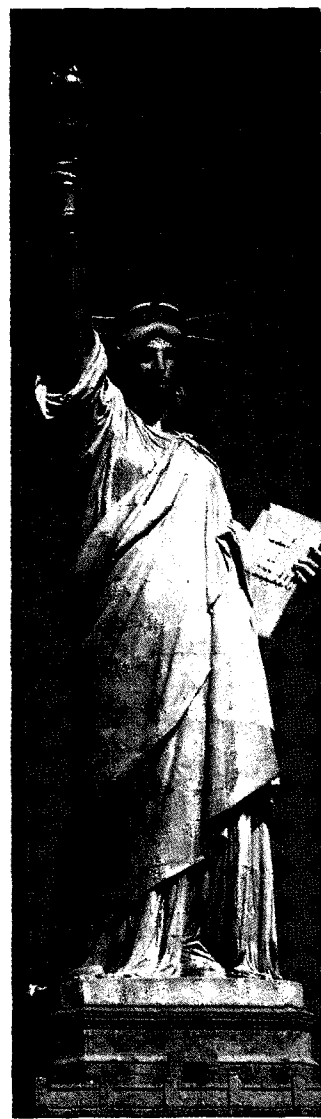
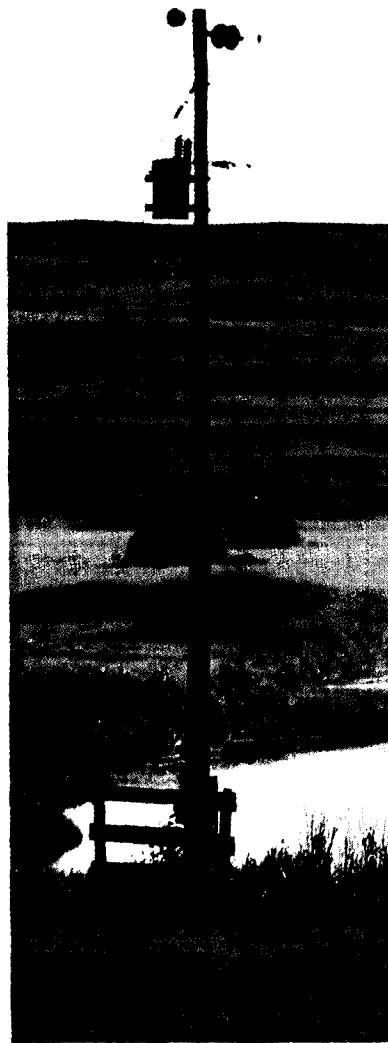
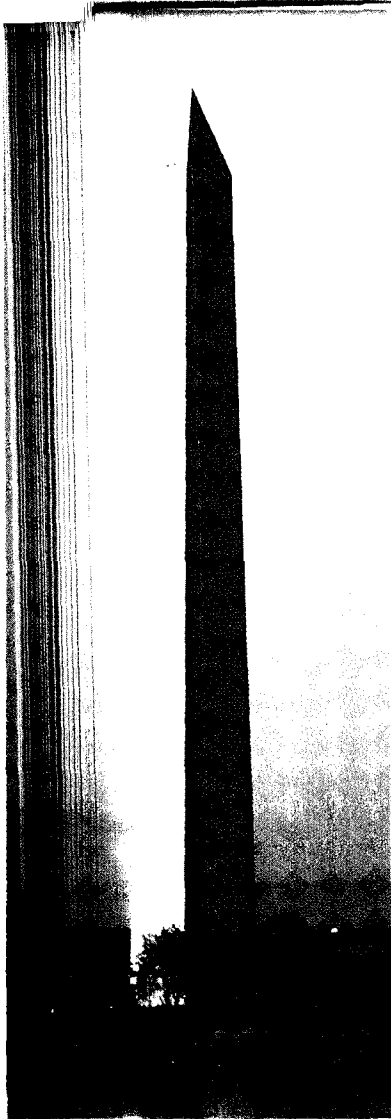
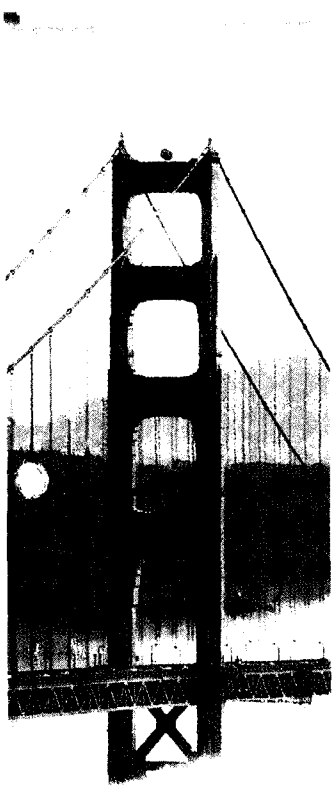
of pellets, the wide-eyed grin of baby goats
and children tugging my sleeve
more whimsy than a man could stand.
So now, days later, where are they,

those knee-high babies nudging for bottles?
What are these hip-high goats with deep voices,
butting the back yard gate until it warps?
Where are my kids who promised to clean

the daily straw reeking like Noah's privy?
Tugging old leather gloves back on,
pliable with sweat like second skin,
I lift the double blades and drive them down

like breaking teeth, squeeze out the broken stone
and go on digging, rolls of barbed wire
waiting to be strung, a dozen more dry holes
before there'll be some order to this dirt.

—Walter McDonald



GREAT AMERICAN LANDMARKS

Like the majestic structures that grace our national landscape, rural electrification stands as a living tribute to America's can-do spirit.

Owned by the people themselves, rural electric cooperatives bring power and opportunity to the countryside.

With power lines spanning three-quarters of the nation's land, and with a tradition of leadership in community action, rural electrics are a solid part of America's economic foundation . . . a landmark of human achievement.



**America's Consumer-Owned
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A Power In The Land

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So get up on the Morning

Edition side of bed. Before long, you won't want to start your day any other way.

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National Public Radio® News

Although as old as Hollywood itself, the fantasy has changed in several ways since the late seventies. First of all, the element of wish fulfillment no longer occurs primarily in a last-minute payoff, obviously tacked on, as it did in so many movies of the past—most notably Hitchcock's *Suspicion* and Frank Capra's *Meet John Doe* (both 1941)—where troubling implications had to be negated through some abrupt, climactic change of heart or unexpected gift of money. This kind of hasty ending is still used today—although the “problems” dramatized, and then dismissed, are generally much slighter than they used to be, and the “solutions” even more perfunctory.

Often, however, today's cinematic wish fulfillment comes not in a sudden and gratuitous final moment, as if the writers didn't know what else to do, but as an obviously calculated piling-up of surplus triumphs—triumph upon triumph upon triumph—not as a quick way to end the film but as its very purpose. Many movies now purvey such surplus wish fulfillment. film after film repeatedly screaming, “You *can* have it all!” Thus in *3 O'Clock High* the high school student Casey Siemaszko manages to beat up the towering, near-homicidal nut who had vowed to pulverize him, while the whole student body cheers, and it cheers again as his girlfriend kisses him adoringly, and then the next day all the kids (the nut, too!) show up with lots of money (to bail Casey out, because he robbed the school store to buy the bully off), and then the winner's tall and dishy English teacher—in front of everyone—rewards the winner further with a long, hot, womanly kiss: “Un-buh-*leev*-a-bull!” murmurs an admiring teen.

Such surplus wish fulfillment recurs in movies that seem more respectable. In *sex, lies and videotape*, Andie MacDowall is, although well off and gorgeous, an unhappy person: a bored housewife, racked by anxieties, sexually repressed, and married to an evil yuppie lawyer who (she doesn't know this yet) is cheating on her with her own sister, a hostile tart who does it sheerly out of sibling rivalry. Into this situation floats James Spader, an old college pal of the husband's and now a wandering semi-bohemian who, impotent, spends all his time either videotaping the sexual confessions of female acquaintances or (we gather) masturbating in front of one tape or another. Spader befriends MacDowall, who feels drawn to the pale, vague onanist, although she disapproves of his hobby.

Much talk ensues, and eventually MacDowall finds her sister's earring under her own bed.irate, she rushes off to Spader's house, and demands that he now videotape *her* confessions—in the midst of which she starts interrogating *him*. Suddenly bold, certain, and desirous, she initiates lovemaking, and cures his impotence. Spader, redeemed, wrecks his tapes and camera. MacDowall swiftly leaves her husband and gets herself a job (and a new car). With cool forgiveness, she then brings a rhododendron to her sister, who, having hated MacDowall's guts throughout the movie, now sheepishly adores her.

The husband, meanwhile, gets fired, as if by God Himself. At the end MacDowall and Spader make a calm and handsome couple—like Ben and Elaine at the end of *The Graduate*, but without the irony.

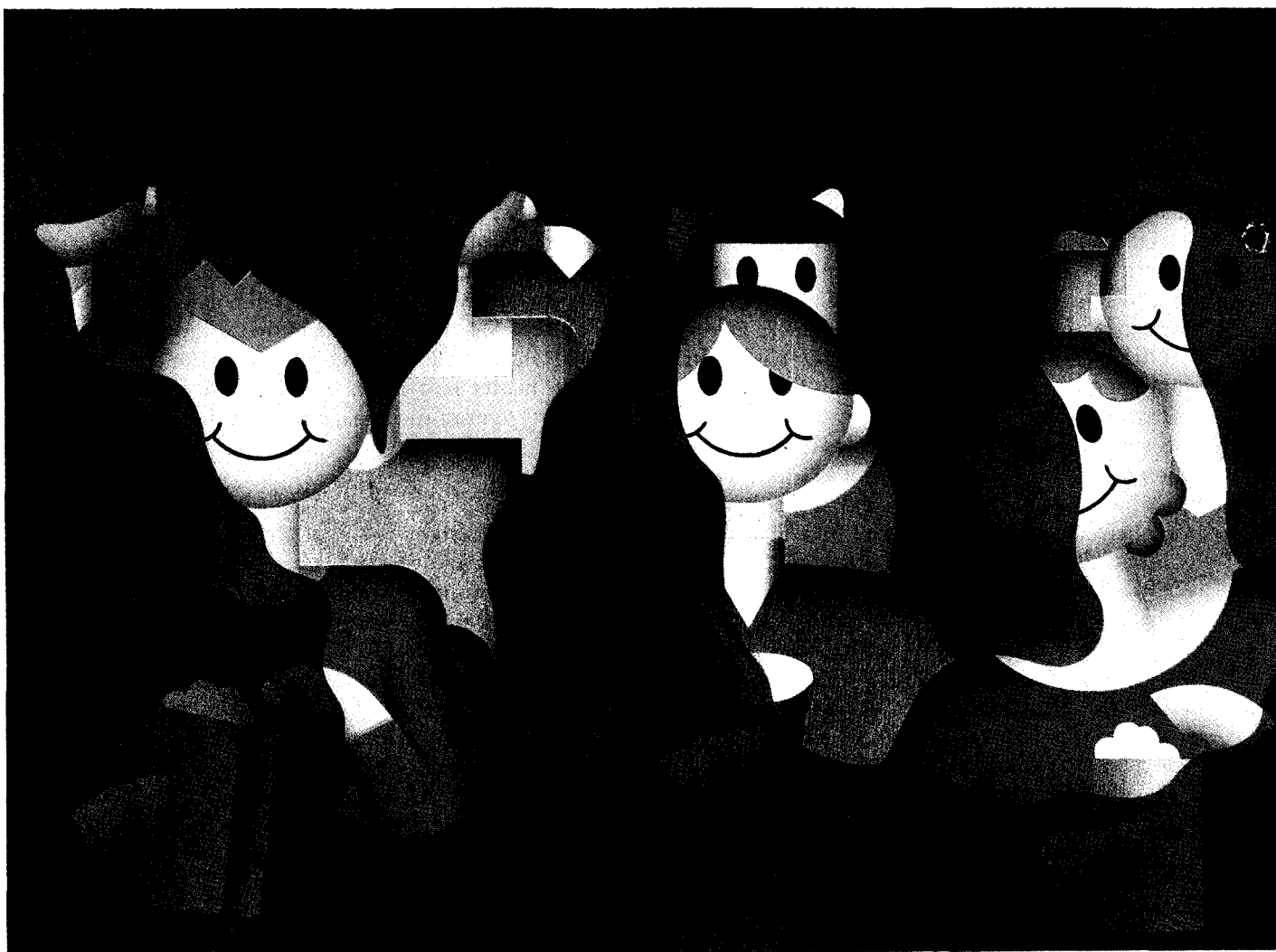
Each of these movies has the feel of narrative for only as long as it takes to set up its basic situation, and then it starts to seem less like a story than a daydream. The fantasy contains only the (many) victories of the attractive viewer-surrogate within the film—and that fantastic element is not just paramount within the movie but, finally, its whole content. In this way film narrative has been displaced by the pseudo-narrative of advertising—whose idealizing and disjointed images cannot compose a story, no matter how much the ad world has tried in recent years to exalt such images to narrative status.

Promiscuous Ridicule

FORMERLY THE MOVIE (LIKE MANY ADS BEFORE the seventies) was a sort of exit visa from the working world, proffering an “escape” through empathy with some intrepid hero or heroine who had a lofty job to do in an exotic or aristocratic setting. Today's movies tend not to extol the lucky, plucky character who marries up or wins a war but, often, the star who plays that character—and who shines as the true object of your empathy, simply because she or he is the center of attention. The change is evident in all those closing-credit sequences that feature outtakes of the stars euphorically kidding on the set, and in the frequent “comic” bit that has a character do a rapturous sportscast commentary on his own athletic horseplay before imaginary cheering crowds. In short, feeling warmly watched by everyone now seems a sweeter fantasy than the fictitious heroisms of past cinema, in which the star's fame helped to glamorize the story. Now celebrity *is* the story, just as in the ads.

Reinforcing the surplus wish fulfillment, this foregrounding of celebrity has helped erode film narrative, for all that's needed now (aside from grabbers) is a series of setups that convey the feeling of being watched by an admiring audience. Thus *Hoosiers* is filled in with extended slo-mo sequences of deft, victorious athletics, as in an ad for *Sports Illustrated*, just like the *Rocky* films, like each *Karate Kid*—or like *Fame*, *Flashdance*, *Footloose*, *White Nights*, *Tap*, and other storyless montages of stars dancin'. Similarly, the movie is often a comedian's plotless meta-performance, like *Good Morning, Vietnam*, which mainly shows us Robin Williams doing shtick for audience after audience, or like *Beverly Hills Cop 2* and *The Golden Child*, in both of which Eddie Murphy is . . . just Eddie Murphy, cracking wise in between, and during, the bloody or dazzling parts—just like Bill Murray as a Ghostbuster and in *Scrooged*. (All end happily.)

Even if not an athlete or a comic, the star tends, through his or her new centrality, to obviate any self-suf-

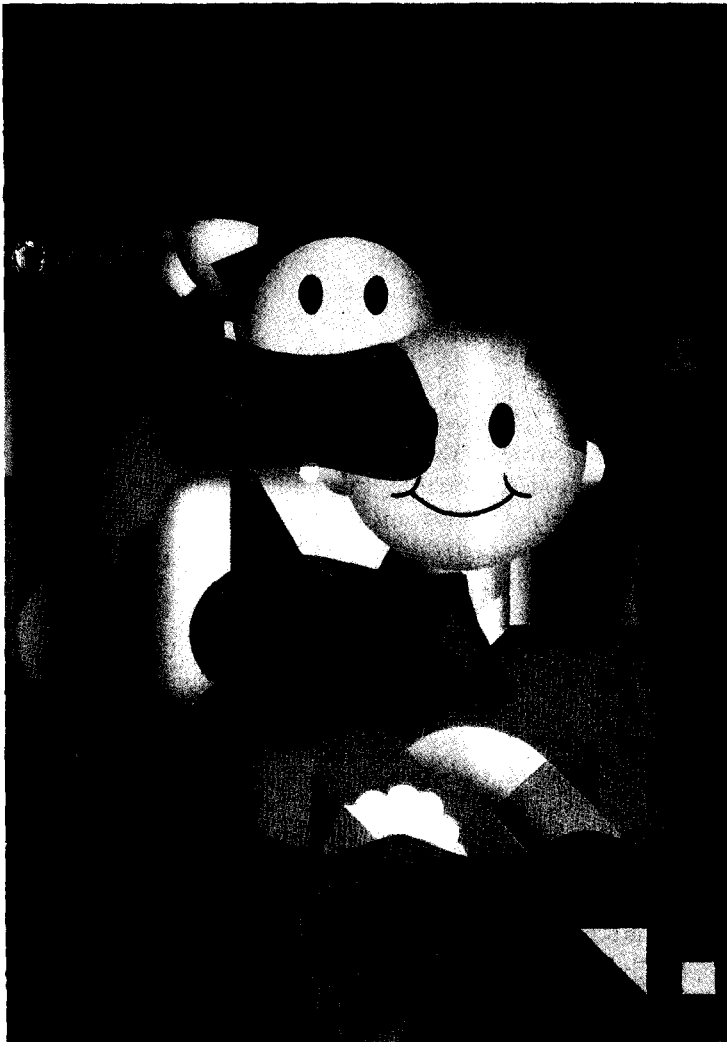


ficient narrative context. Sitting through one of his or her vehicles, you can almost hear the way some agent pitched it years before, because the pitch is all you see: "Fonda's this floozy. She wakes up next to a dead guy"—and that's it for *The Morning After*, which begins with Fonda, playing a floozy, waking up next to a dead guy, and which then . . . goes on for a while, with Fonda looking *real* in every shot, until it all concludes with some thin business too inane to remember. Likewise: "Jimmy Woods is this lawyer from the sixties—with a ponytail? *Now* he's defending *pushers*! Uh . . ." And that's about the whole of *True Believer*, in which nothing memorable occurs (although the ponytail is great!), until the overcomplicated climax, which is as credible as it is entertaining.

The elevation of stardom over narrative has required not only that celebrity be foregrounded relentlessly but also that it be invidiously set off, through systematic hostile contrast with the numerous jerks, creeps, dweebs, dorks, freaks, shmucks, bitches, bastards, phonies, fags, and sleazeballs that now surround the star. The belittlement of all except the central character is a strategy that goes way, way back in the narrative tradition, recurring

in, say, *Pride and Prejudice* as well as in innumerable texts that are a lot less readable today. It is not that this cheap trick is peculiar to today's movies but that in the movies the trick is incessant, automatic, and extreme—each dip or jackass serving only, through his or her perfect worthlessness, to make the star look, and us feel, cooler.

Thus Casey Siemaszko is (of course) surrounded by a mob of nerds and brats and fatsos (even his friends), just as Andie MacDowell's randy, lying husband and mean sister are (of course) depicted as pure scum (although the sister is redeemed at the happy ending). In more and more movies only the star—and, sometimes, his or her special friend—is not an utter joke. In *Baby Boom* the rising corporate manager Diane Keaton, left with an unexpected baby (not her own), is thereby enabled to seem terribly superior to the young ass-kissing crud who finally gets her job, the two dull, dumpy yokels (from *Duluth*!) who almost adopt the precious baby girl (but Keaton saves her!), various thick-witted rubes up in Vermont (where Keaton moves when she loses her job), and four laughably affected yuppie fools who blow into the general store where Keaton's homemade applesauce is on dis-



play, and who eagerly buy several dozen jars, thereby initiating Keaton's rise to entrepreneurial greatness, which allows her first to be courted fawningly by those phony pigs who had let her go, and then, majestically, to turn them down.

The same promiscuous ridicule recurs throughout movie after movie: John Landis's *Coming to America*, Rob Reiner's *The Sure Thing* and *When Harry Met Sally . . .*, Howard Deutch's *Pretty in Pink*, John Hughes's *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, and countless others. Often the star's prerogative permits him or her to do more than smirk at those flakes and nitwits. In *Working Girl* chilly, two-faced bitch Sigourney Weaver, having thwarted warm, hard-working (two-faced) sweet thing Melanie Griffith, is humiliated out of all proportion to her "crime," in a scene that is unbearable to watch, unless you see things as the movie means you to—that is, as the movie's heroine sees things, herself included.

Then there's John Hughes's *Uncle Buck*, in which big lovable slob John Candy, having found his teenaged niece's sneaky, creepy-looking, overprivileged little snottose of a boyfriend lying atop some other girl, moves in

on him with a devilish smile and with a live power drill in his hand: cut. Candy is now cruising the suburban night, finds his niece (who's out walking, heartbroken), and tells her that he has something to show her. He opens the car trunk to reveal the two-timing little puke, hands bound tightly with electrical tape and another piece across his mouth. Candy rips off that piece of tape ("Owww!!" yells the little putz), hoists the kid up by the arm, and drops him on the street (*thud!*—"Ow!"). The kid runs away and then turns around and (what a doofus!) starts taunting Candy, who calmly hefts a golf club, tees up on the street, and sends that ball right at the little wienie's skull (*thunk!*—"Ouch!"). Then he does it again.

Such gratuitous sadism, played for laughs, has only recently become a standard feature of the movies, along with that compulsive, adolescent jeering at everyone who's not the star. Even with all their painful stereotypes, the movies on the whole used to purvey a kinder view of people than they do today—now that the sitcom has universalized the sneering put-down, and, more important, now that the movies have converged with advertising, which divides all humanity into the cool few and everybody else.

The Epoch of Revision

THE GENERAL SURPLUS CHARACTER OF TODAY'S fantasies was not, in fact, a common feature of the movies until the late seventies, when *Rocky*, *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and *Superman* kicked off the current age of systematic big-screen infantilism. Indeed, for several years before then (and in ever fewer exceptions after) American film was remarkable for the tentative mood or outright darkness that often marked the final scenes of its most memorable works: the masterpieces of Francis Ford Coppola, Robert Altman, Roman Polanski, Stanley Kubrick, and Sam Peckinpah, the best films of Hal Ashby, Jerry Schatzberg, Bob Fosse, William Friedkin, and Alan Pakula, and dozens of other powerful (if flawed) movies that, collectively, rebut the claim that Hollywood has "always" sold cotton candy—Michael Ritchie's *The Candidate*, John Huston's *The Man Who Would Be King*, Sydney Pollack's *Three Days of the Condor*, Ted Kotcheff's *North Dallas Forty*, Arthur Penn's *Night Moves*, Michael Douglas and James Bridges's *The China Syndrome*, George Roy Hill's *Slap Shot*, Peter Yates's *The Friends of Eddie Coyle*, Ule Grosband's *Straight Time*, Bryan Forbes's *The Stepford Wives*, and Sidney Lumet's *The Anderson Tapes*, *Serpico*, *Dog Day Afternoon*, and *Network*, among many others, including George Lucas's *American Graffiti*, and Stephen Spielberg's *The Sugarland Express*.

It would be wrong, however, to imply that once upon a time all Hollywood pictures ended in the same warm glow of factitious "bliss." Many big-budget products of the old studio system did not end as movies do today—a

fact that we would recognize at once if any of those earlier films were remade now. Today Rhett and Scarlett would patch things up and have a baby, Shane would come back, Charles Foster Kane would find his sled, Tom Joad would get to be a CEO, and Mildred Pierce would send her daughter out for counseling (and the two of them would end up in a freeze-frame, hugging).

This is, unfortunately, no idle satire—for Hollywood has since the late seventies systematically bowdlerized the best of its own heritage, over and over whitening out the darkness of some earlier film in order to create yet one more total wish-fulfillment fantasy. Thus has Hollywood's old banalizing instinct not only gotten worse but now turned in on Hollywood's own canon. Once it was only plays and novels that the studios would buy up and (often) standardize—a process that Gilbert Seldes in 1950 called "the art of licking." For elaboration he quoted Evelyn Waugh: "Each book purchased for motion pictures has some individual quality, good or bad, that has made it remarkable. It is the work of a great array of highly paid and incompatible writers to distinguish the quality, separate it, and obliterate it."

Since the seventies Hollywood has resumed the art of licking, post-sweetening plays and novels just as Mayer or Zanuck would have done—only now the audience is deemed (and deems itself) sophisticated, because the speed and gloss of new technique somehow make even the hokiest tricks seem not hokey. Here, for example, is an ending that never made it to the screen:

"Say it ain't true, Roy."

When Roy looked into the boy's eyes he wanted to say it wasn't but couldn't, and he lifted his hands to his face and wept many bitter tears.

Such are the last lines of Bernard Malamud's *The Natural*, written in 1952, whereas the Robert Redford vehicle of 1984 climaxes with Roy Hobbs, although morally compromised, and with an open wound, belting one last meteoric homer (slow motion, fireworks, music, cheering

crowds), thereby winning—that is, *not* throwing—the big game: a finale of bogus jubilation that we might expect in a TV commercial, which figures, since the movie's script was written by BBDO's Phil Dusenberry, the maker of many ads for, among other products, Diet Pepsi and Ronald Reagan.

Today Hollywood not only turns good writing into bad movies but also turns good movies into advertising. This advance reflects Hollywood's general shift away from its old dependency on literary sources and into automatic self-cannibalization, as those who make the deals and movies nowadays know nothing much but some earlier movies and the TV programs of their childhood—works that are endlessly recycled in the great downpour of sequels and remakes, both implicit and overt, that is American film today. Certainly this endless self-revival betrays a general uninventiveness; less apparent is the continual bright erasure in this process of all uncanny moments, all discordant notes—those elements that made the originals compelling in the first place.

For instance, Hollywood has revised the somber urban parable of the great athlete used up or driven out by the gangsters who control the game. Here the epoch of revision starts with the first rise of Rocky Balboa, in 1976. Despite the artful squalor of its setting, *Rocky* is a simple stimulant, conveying none of the fatalism that had, in fact, been the whole point of boxing films from *Golden Boy* (1939) and *Body and Soul* (1947) to *The Harder They Fall* (1956) and *Requiem for a Heavyweight* (1962). That tragic genre pointed up the champ's brief hour of glory, his manipulation by corrupt old men, the slow wreckage of his mind and frame. (Thus the boxer recalls the entertainer—a simile that Martin Scorsese worked into his superb and antithetical 1980 film *Raging Bull*.) For Rocky, on the other hand, boxing is, although colorfully seedy, a sport as clean as tiddledywinks, involving no bets, no dives, no crooked action. Nor does Rocky seem to have been at all affected by the numerous head punches that have crippled so many other boxers, real and fictional,



but keeps his sleepy cinquecento mug pristine through sequel after sequel.

Throughout the epoch of revision, earlier filmed indictments or examinations of the state or status quo have recurred—but as ad-like affirmations of our way of life. Thus Eisenstein's nightmare vision, in *Potemkin* (1925), of the czarist massacre on the Odessa steps becomes a crude, adrenalizing bit in Brian de Palma's *The Untouchables* (1987), its gruesome climax negated by a happy ending that makes heroes of the Feds. And thus Jean Renoir's wry and complex vision of the bourgeoisie in *Boudu Saved From Drowning* (1932) is inverted in Paul Mazursky's remake, *Down and Out in Beverly Hills* (1986), which ends not with the tramp impulsively deserting his adoptive family but with Nick Nolte trying, and failing, to escape the affluent and cuddly Whitemans. And thus Nicholas Ray's *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955), a rich, bleak story of how the young are inexorably broken by their fearful parents, comes back as *Footloose* (1984), in which young Kevin Bacon finally gets the whole town *dancin'*!—a pseudo-celebration of such bad faith that it inspired a number of TV commercials for McDonald's. And thus Roman Polanski's *Chinatown* (1974), a devastating allegory of corporate power and American dominion, recurs as the jolly tale of Toontown in *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988)—a simple, goofy fantasy, despite its frequent wit, and therefore just the thing for pushing Diet Coke.

What with all their high-speed montage, their state-of-the-art rock scores slamming through us, the movies seem hipper than hip, and yet for sheer parochialism they outdo Pangloss himself: this is not only the best of all possible worlds—this (the movies teach us) is the only world possible! No more cynical Roy Hobbs, no wayward Boudu, no disillusioned J. J. Gittes! The critical outsider has been thoroughly revised out of the movies—and so has that overpowering sense of the uncanny that marks certain prior movies: the feeling that makes those films seem so unusual.

Like the Balboan emendation of the boxing genre, this

other grand revision starts in the late seventies: *Star Wars* (1977) is a deliberate renovation of Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), which George Lucas, his biographer notes, deemed "the ultimate sci-fi film"—although it was "too obscure and downbeat for his tastes." What most impressed Lucas in *2001* was its technical craftsmanship, and yet only a few of Kubrick's effects recur in the *Star Wars* movies: believable gadgetry and the video-game sensation of delicious forward speed. Absent is the abyssal feeling of deep space—its utter quiet, its dark infinitude, and the absurdity out there of terms like "up" and "down."

The eeriness of *2001*, however, arises not only from its convincing sense of the void but also from its troubling hints of deep similarities between its nonhuman and human characters—the polite, demented HAL and the murderous ape-man whose use of weaponry begins the film (and human history). Lucas therefore had to sentimentalize those beings whose "human" traits make *2001* so uncanny an experience: thus the hairy, murderous early man recurs as the hairy and benevolent Chewbacca, now no simian rival but Han Solo's doglike sidekick; and the homicidal HAL, with his superior manner and his secret dream of taking charge, recurs both diminished and divided, as the two cute little "droids" C-3PO and R2-D2, technological assistants now unthreateningly dated, the one looking like a fire hydrant in an old cartoon, the other like the Tin Man in *The Wizard of Oz*. Whereas Kubrick's characters (in all his films) are thwarted by the very fact of their humanity, in the *Star Wars* movies there is no necessity at all. At the end of *Return of the Jedi* the dead (Kenobi, Yoda, Vader) are partying along with everybody else; and when in *The Empire Strikes Back* Luke has his hand cut off—hey! no problem! He gets a new one!

Like *2001*, Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960) has been multiply revised, because it, too, is an uncanny masterpiece, reflecting eerily on those who watch it (as all of Hitchcock's best films do). Years later, and even after all the big-screen deaths so much more graphic, the sudden slaughtering of Marion Crane is still a moment of unequaled horror, pathos, and surprise—a horror deepened by the radical empathic shift that occurs right afterward. That thing had come into the *shower*, and—for no reason—slashed at her viciously, and just when she'd decided to (in every sense) come clean. The event terrifies us because we side with her, empathizing with her terror, her nakedness. But then the young man comes in, sees the carnage, shows revulsion—and as he starts to tidy up, we side with *him*, now feeling oddly gratified to see the blood rinsed down the drain, the tiles mopped clean, her body wrapped and stowed so neatly, and then her white car slowly, slowly sinking, until it's finally gone, deliciously obliterated, perfectly submerged in that nocturnal pool behind the Bates Motel.

Driven by a puritanical hatred that he denies in himself, Norman, the apparent "psycho," is not unlike the

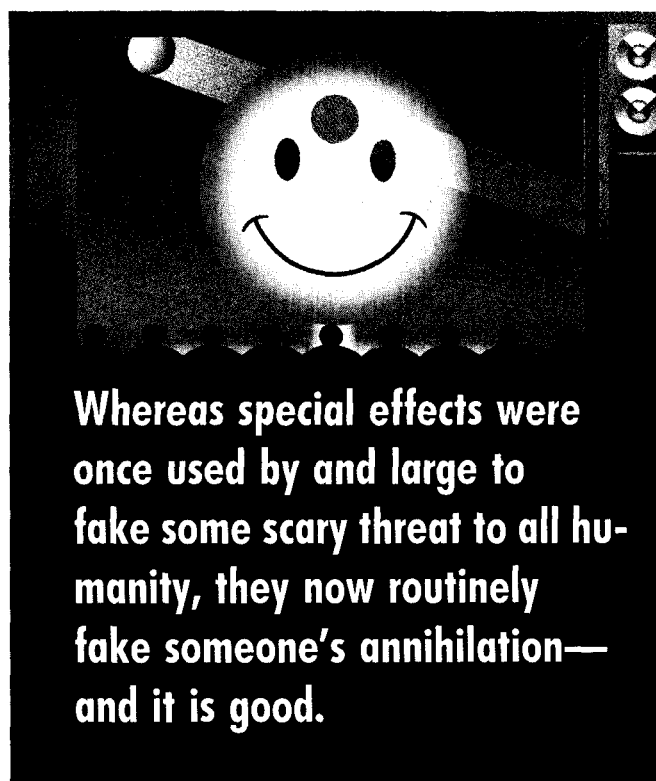


In the original *Psycho* (top) "our whole project of absolute repression breaks down in a terminal montage of unsurpassed uncanniness." In *Psycho III* (below) nothing comes eerily to the surface.

movie's other, "normal" characters, who are also kept from pleasure by the dead hand of the past. What is eeriest about Norman's madness, however, is its similarity to our spectatorship as Hitchcock reflects upon it: for we, like Norman, are driven by aggressions that we let fictitious others act out on our behalf. In the end his and our whole project of absolute repression breaks down in a terminal montage of unsurpassed uncanniness, as that boyish face smiles up at us through Mother's bony rictus, and then the white car re-emerges startlingly, yanked up and lunging toward us from the depths.

In the very films devised to exploit *Psycho*, its uncanniness has been repressed. In *Psycho II* (1983) and *Psycho III* (1986) the peculiar horror of 1960 becomes another Golden Oldie, and Norman's psychic paralysis, once an oblique and terrifying challenge to the audience, recurs as an outright desideratum: "He's back!" Moreover, both sequels treat us to a series of outlandish murders, as a number of delicious bimbos are variously sliced and punctured, dying with many a hoarse scream and rich arterial spurt. Frankly pandering to the misogynistic animus, the sequels mark a full retreat from Hitchcock's troubling reflection on the audience.

Hitchcock has been thus invoked and contradicted throughout this era, in dozens of thrillers, both costly and low-budget, that adapt some of his tricks, perversely, to work up and then mollify the hateful parent-imago within each of us. In the slasher films it is the horny, active boys and girls who tend to get it in the neck, chest, stomach, eyes, nape, whereas it is the chaste teen heroine who (temporarily) burns or blows up or drowns the vengeful Jason, Freddy, Michael. For the putative grownups there has been *Fatal Attraction*, in which Michael Douglas is nightmarishly pursued by Glenn Close after—as punishment for—their illicit weekend of hot sex (an interlude of passion that is itself depicted as a farce). After lots of provocation, Glenn Close/Mrs. Bates—rising out of Douglas's bathtub, knife in hand—is enjoyably bumped off (and her unborn baby handily aborted) by Anne Archer, Douglas's sweet, asexual wife, who nails the harpy mid-torso with a big handgun. Other directors have also invoked Hitchcock in films that punish women for their sexual allure or appetite: Brian de



Palma in *Body Double*, a *Vertigo/Rear Window* rehash whose dramatic high point is the impalement of Deborah Shelton with a massive power drill, and David Lynch in *Blue Velvet*, wherein Dennis Hopper brutalizes Isabella Rossellini with a zest that is not quite justified by the film's apparent aim to represent the "dark side" of reality.

There is plenty of such outlandish sexual cruelty throughout the movies. Meanwhile, the true pain of eros has been revised out of many earlier films. Adrian Lyne's *9½ Weeks* (1986), a glossy, static update of Bernardo Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris* (1972), is about as sexy as a locked warehouse full of designer

shoes, whereas the original did generate some heat, despite its tedious artiness and many passages of utter bull. While there is plenty of abuse, there is no sense of inner torment in Lyne's fashion show, which ends, or stops, with Kim Basinger simply walking out on her lover Mickey Rourke and then traipsing homeward in the rain, weeping soulfully and looking like ten million dollars. Compare this ad-like close with Bertolucci's harsh and psychologically incisive ending, in which Jeanne (Maria Schneider) shoots and kills her lover (Marlon Brando) at the very moment that she first tells him her name.

And then there's Rob Reiner's *When Harry Met Sally* . . . (1989), a lite version of Woody Allen's *Manhattan* (1979) so close in plot to the original that it could be deemed a plagiarism if it were not so bald an act of homage—and so grossly antithetical in tone and message. Contradicting Allen's movie (and the drift of its own story, such as it is), the film ends up denying the melancholy of erotic life. At the end of *Manhattan*, Allen, musing fondly on the much younger girl he'd earlier loved and dropped, races out of his apartment and through the city streets, needing to see and reclaim her—but finds her on her way to Europe, and knows that she'll forget about him there, despite her heartbreaking reassurance (and the film's last line): "You've got to have faith in people sometimes." In contrast, Billy Crystal, having dumped his old friend Meg Ryan after a night of lovemaking, and despite his heavily established inability to "commit" to any woman he's had sex with, suddenly races through the city streets, needing to see and reclaim her, and—hey! no sweat! She takes him back, and they get married!

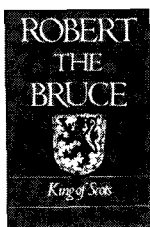
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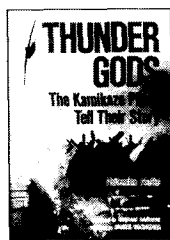
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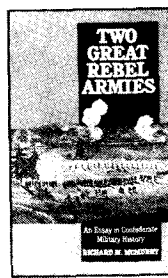
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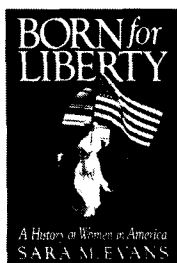
9282. \$22.50/\$16.95



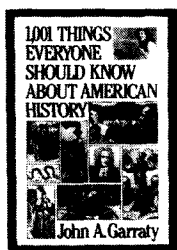
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6767. \$29.95/\$18.95



1628. \$24.95/\$18.95

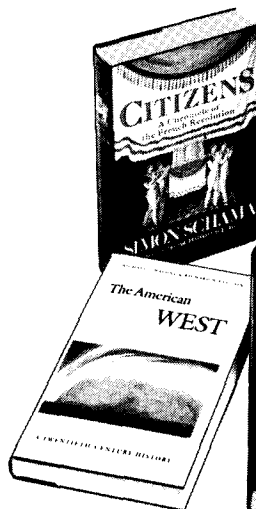


1057. \$19.95/\$17.50

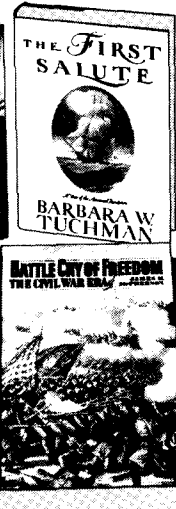
1396. \$29.95/\$21.95

6080. \$22.95/\$17.50

1925. \$22.95/\$17.50



2675. \$31.50/\$21.50



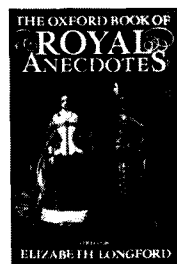
3988. \$35/\$22.50



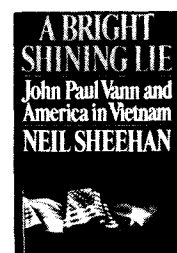
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2162. \$27.50/\$21.50



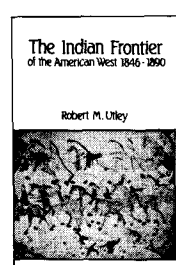
1636. \$22.95/\$18.95



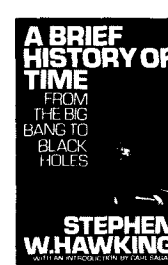
1495. \$24.95/\$18.50



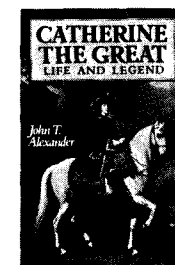
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The New Happy Ending

THE EPOCH OF REVISION, WITH ITS PERFECT comebacks, dancin' populations, kindly aliens, lovers marrying, athletes scoring, winners winning, reflects an intense and widespread fear of loss. In Hollywood (as throughout the corporate world) this fear of loss has found its outlet in an all-consuming drive for profits that makes even the vast avarice of the old studio heads seem restrained. It is this drive, necessitated by the global competition of the media monopolists, that has compelled the industry vice-presidents to resell again and again whatever sold before, just as the advertisers do. "Movies are becoming a product-line business, like Detroit or the cereal business," Harlan Jacobsen, then the editor of *Film Comment*, lamented last year. This was no exaggeration, reflecting, as it did, on an industry whose executives refer to movie stars as "assets" and to each run of sequels as a "franchise." The packaged-goods analogy would not offend the studio heads, who want their movies to be as well-liked and predictable as any other winning item. "Eddie Murphy is our Kellogg's Corn Flakes," Frank Mancuso, the chairman of Paramount, remarked last year.

Such purely economic motives, however, do not fully explain the movies' grand regression in the eighties, for that compulsive movement backward is not just a moneymaking exploit but a nostalgic reflex—or, rather, the movement back makes money *because* of its nostalgic import, which is what draws those executives, personally as well as capitalistically, to such projects in the first place. "This is an uncanny time, when people are looking backward to go forward," the executive producer of the new *Lassie* comments. That backward gaze reveals, in part, the escapist longing of the so-called Baby Boomers, or at least those in Hollywood, to re-enter the imaginary Eden of their own adolescence. "I loved *Dragnet*," says David Permut, the producer of the movie. Rob Cohen, the vice-chairman of a production company working on a film version of *The Flintstones*, said in 1987, "I'm thirty-seven years old, and I started watching *The Flintstones* when I was ten, the year it went on the air." As the Boomers go, so goes the consuming nation, whose people generally are also "looking backward to go forward"—if the success not only of those nostalgic shows and movies but also of Reagan and Bush is any indication. Those images console us with invocations of the good old days when we were all allegedly well off—and when the United States was still, to quote Dan Quayle, "the envy of the world," its postwar economic primacy undiminished. As daily life becomes more threatening, such dreamy invocations of the past take on an increased psychic importance.

However, there is more to Hollywood's regression than mere post-imperial nostalgia. Although backward-looking, Hollywood does not in fact return us to the spectacle of yesteryear but, as we have seen, systematically *negates*

the narrative force of the originals. We are watching not what people watched when Ike was President but a spectacle that has been meticulously engineered to gratify at every single moment: the movies now (like the ads and our political theatrics) are deliberately concocted as relentless uppers, their images devised to keep us happy, thereby creating a heavy atmosphere of continual stand-up; easy shocks along with constant solace, flattery, and affirmation; a new global belt of laughing gas, which seems to have induced among the viewers (and reviewers) who've been breathing it a desperate taste for more of the same.

Whereas the movies once could dramatize a painful choice, the new fear of loss prohibits such a story; and whereas prior movies could at times reflect, albeit obliquely, on dark forces outside (and inside) the theater, the new taste refuses any such bad news. Indeed, the fear of loss seems so intense that it now rejects not just a downbeat story but any story whatsoever, as if the crucial difference between fiction and reality were too much to bear. Whereas narrative requires that you maintain some sense of distance from it, what the movies offer, and what their viewers seem to crave, is the infantilizing promise of *no distance*: no separation, never any feeling of exclusion—not even from the spectacle itself.

The advertising industry has noticed this new flight from story into spectacle. Discussing the largest, most free-spending bloc of viewer-consumers in America today, the researchers at Grey Advertising explain that having been "raised on daily doses of television imagery," these "UltraConsumers" have minds that "are primed to blur the boundaries that separate fiction from fact." Dependent on the images they watch nonstop, and always trying to emulate them, however much it costs, the "Ultras" are the most desirable of markets, to be avidly pursued for their confusion:

Today, as they infuse their lives with an action-packed schedule of drama, adventure, variety and, of course, costume changes, Ultras are merging their glamorous fantasies with everyday reality. All things considered, it's not so surprising that after years of exposure to electronic heroes, the average UltraConsumer wants to be one.

Hollywood now offers to fulfill that longing, by ending movie after movie with the same upbeat moment, which appears to negate first of all the distance between us and the spectacle. Such is Hollywood's new happy ending: an image of euphoric melding, as the audience within the frame looks on and cheers.

In other words, a type of ending once fittingly reserved for musicals now terminates movies of all kinds, which routinely climax in a shot or scene of spectatorial ecstasy that is clearly meant to infuse us with the same rapture. In this way the movies—and not only such neo-musicals as *Coal Miner's Daughter*, *Purple Rain*, and *Dirty Dancing*—actually applaud themselves. Thus both

Ghostbusters climax with the same salute to *Ghostbusters*, whose hip stars arrive to save the day as grateful citizens chant, "Ghostbusters! Ghostbusters! Ghostbusters!" And thus, in *Rocky IV*, Stallone stands victorious (again), Old Glory draped heroically around his giant shoulders, as the usual trumpets bop and blare and all of Moscow chants the movie's name. And thus the crowd *erupts!* at the climax of each of the *Karate Kid* movies, just as the crowds *erupt!* at the climaxes of *The Natural*, *Hoosiers*, and *3 O'Clock High*, of *Scrooged* and *Major League* and *Lean on Me*, of *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure* and *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, of *Young Einstein* and *Born on the Fourth of July*, and so many more.

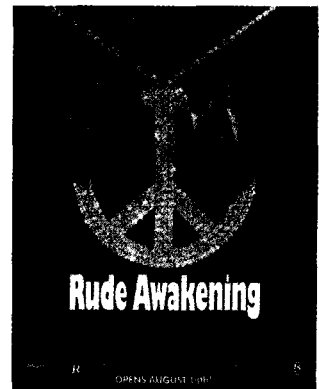
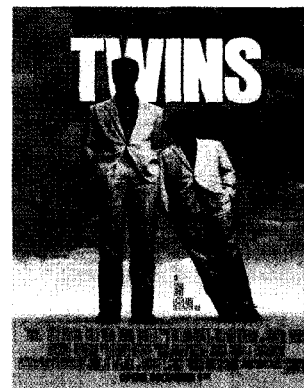
Mergers

BUT THE NEW HAPPY ENDING REVEALS MORE THAN Hollywood's rising need for great big hits, for there is more to this repetitious climax than its bald solicitation to go *clap clap clap*. More often than not, what the crowd within the frame applauds is, specifically, another merger: the melding of two "opposites" into a unity.

At the end of *An Officer and a Gentleman*, Richard Gere, now very much the officer and gentleman in his crisp dress whites, sweeps masterfully into the factory where the lower-class Debra Winger, dressed real funky, operates a big machine. As such a hero would have done in 1947, Gere sweeps Winger off her feet and carries her away—only now, instead of its being left to the women in the theater audience to clap and sigh, the two are applauded by the other women in the factory (an integrated group), who are also dressed funky.

At the end of *Crocodile Dundee* the urbane and fleshy Linda Kozlowski, a glamorous American reporter, runs after the lean and leathery Paul Hogan, the blunt Aussie adventurer whom she brought back to the States, made famous, and now loves (and who has decided to go home). She hurries down into a subway station and, halting on the stairs, sees Hogan standing at the far end of the platform, which is so jammed with everyday people that she can't get near him. She calls to him, but he can't hear her, nor she him, so each of their love shouts is repeated twice, semaphore-style, by two obliging *Untermenschen*: a bearded Jamaican and a beefily stereotypic construction worker. Finally, the leads having reconciled, Hogan hoists himself up and makes his way over to Kozlowski by tramping on the shoulders of the intervening crowd, who look up in delight as he steps on them so adroitly, and break into loud cheers when the stars finally form Kozlowski-Hogan.

Over and over "opposites" converge as everyone applauds—in *The Color Purple*, *Heartbreak Ridge*, *Married to the Mob*, *Everybody's All-American*, *Young Einstein*, *Over the Top*, the first three *Rocky* movies, *True Believer*, each *Karate Kid*, *Stripes*, *My Favorite Year*, *Overboard*, *Cocktail*, *In-*



Some recent movie advertisements: "Film after film is based on ... a tendentious pairing, as two antithetical stereotypes are pushed together."

diana Jones and the Temple of Doom, The Running Man, Without a Clue, Desperately Seeking Susan, and Outrageous Fortune, among others. In all of these, two "different" types end up hugging or dancing close or strolling off together, as a knot or mob of watchers claps and/or yells "Yeah!" and/or "Hurray!"

Differences within the frame, it seems, are just as threatening as our distance from it; and so, as the new happy ending seems to let us jump that gap through an empathic merger with those filmed applauders, it also merges all the figures on the screen into one big happy family, or, rather, into a seeming group portrait in which every figure is identical. It is the purpose of the new happy ending to obviate the threat of difference through the very figures that seem to pose it so schematically. Those melding opposites, of course, turn out never to have been very different from each other in the first place.

Film after film is based on, its "plot" enabled by, a tendentious pairing, as two antithetical stereotypes are pushed together (white man and black man, Harry and Sally, earthling and alien, old Asian and U.S. kid) so that, through their "conflicts," they can banter until they merge and end the story. Certainly some such play of opposites recurs throughout the history of modern comedy, from Shakespeare to *The Odd Couple*; and there are a few post-seventies movies that have also found some truth, and therefore real humor, in the clash of disjunct temperaments: John Cassavetes's *Gloria*, John Sayles's *Baby, It's You*, and the exquisitely acted *Midnight Run*. Generally, however, the struggle of the opposites is based not on any human traits but sheerly on commercial necessity. In former days Hollywood also had a penchant for the stereotypic pairing—as in *The Cowboy and the Lady* (1938), *Her Highness and the Bellboy* (1945), *The Prince and the Showgirl* (1957), and other dogs—but only in the eighties did the device come to be used incessantly, and almost always as a way to represent, and celebrate, the same difference.

The usual pairings have the formulaic character, and ultimately the purpose, of the opposites portrayed in ads

("He likes hardware. She likes software. *But there's one thing they agree on*"). Thus we have that staple of the cop movie, the loose-and-tight combination: in both *Lethal Weapon* films black and proper Danny Glover, who goes by the book, is paired up with wild, white Mel Gibson, who breaks the rules, as in *Dragnet*, wherein proper Dan Ackroyd goes by the book, while wild Tom Hanks breaks the rules, as in *The Big Easy*, which has wild cop Dennis Quaid routinely break the rules, while Ellen Barkin, the starchy DA, goes by the book, much as in *Shoot to Kill*, which has black urbanite Sidney Poitier, who goes by the book, teamed up with white backwoodsman Tom Berenger, who follows his own rules.

The cop combo now pervades the genres, or what passes for them. In *Married to the Mob* she breaks the rules, he goes by the book, as in *Something Wild*, in which a mild male clone is liberated by a hot-shoppin' female, which happens also to be the premise of *Desperately Seeking Susan*, although it's not a male who's freed by the sultry, go-for-it Madonna but the naive suburbanite Rosanna Arquette, who does here what prim Shelley Long does in *Outrageous Fortune*, while it's Long's "opposite," Bette Midler, who breaks the rules, rather like James Woods, the lawyer in *True Believer*, a cynical pothead paired up with sober, earnest Robert Downey, Jr., who goes by the book—like the short, pathologically tidy Dustin Hoffman in *Rain Man*, paired up with his tall, normal, impulsive brother Tom Cruise, or like the tidy gentle Sally, whose hyperneatness is the object of much joshing by the (tidy) Jewish Harry. (At the end Hoffman and Cruise push heads together, Downey and Woods stroll off together, Sally and Harry marry.)

Through this repetitious contrast each pairing sells the same liberatory promise sold by advertising, which routinely shows you one who's hot and one who's not; and if the wild one doesn't win the dull one over (to the product), that very failure ought to win *you* over, since *you* don't want to be a dullard, do you? In the spectacle of tight and loose, whether ad or movie, loose—Gibson, Pfeiffer, Griffith, Madonna—is usually the funny one,



The last frames of *Uncle Buck*, *Beverly Hills Cop*, *Beverly Hills Cop 2*, and *Fletch Lives* (clockwise from the left): "ending movie after movie with the same upbeat moment."

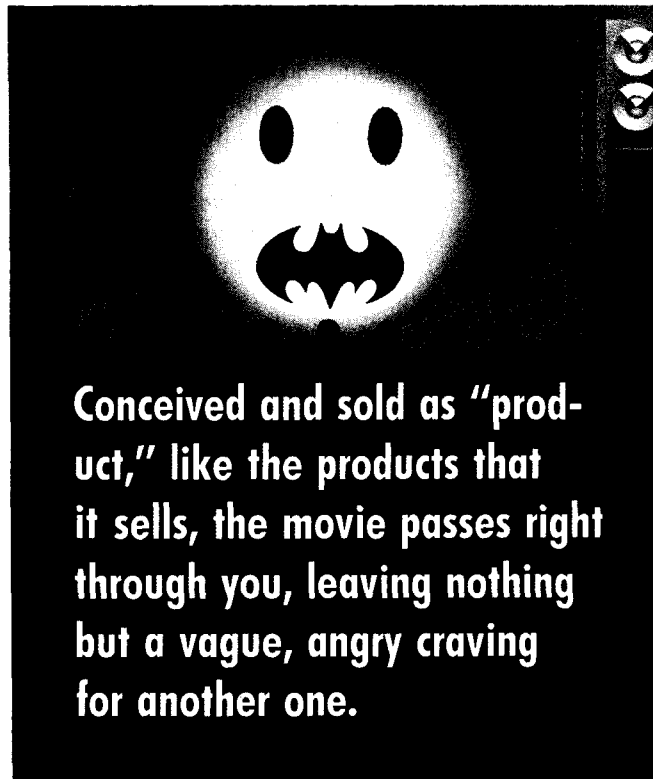


and the smarter shopper, hipper dresser, hotter lover, cooler dancer: that is, the one you'd rather be (although the choice is finally easy in the movies, because tight and loose are ultimately made one).

And while the pairing sells us shopping as liberation, it also sells us on the work world that we must inhabit if we want to keep our Visa(s). The pairing sells, in other words, not just the corporate product (movie, Larks, Bud, Pepsi) but the very structure of the corporation: bureaucracy, which always prevails in these movies, finally absorbing both its "wild" child and the anal one, who, with his or her bureaucratic affect, will also be rewarded—and who will never be dismissed, even if, post-merger, he or she becomes a little "crazier." Despite the movie heroes' frequent grumblings about "red tape" and "the bureaucrats," the movies actually extol the system that produces them, for the usual pairing demonstrates the breadth and tolerance of bureaucracy, which always turns out to have everything in common with its "wildest" employee: the most explosive cops and soldiers—Rambo, Cobra, "Maverick" (in *Top Gun*)—are always crazy not against bureaucracy but in its service. At the end some crusty, decent papa comes down from high atop the company or service or department, grins knowingly upon the pseudo-dissident, and often gives him or her a break.

The new happy ending offers the same reassurance, at once authoritarian and easygoing, that we discern in advertising. The cool mayor who blesses Eddie Murphy at the end of *Beverly Hills Cop 2*, the CEO who promotes Melanie Griffith in *Working Girl*, the top boss who promotes Tom Hanks in *Big*, the warm general who chuckles craggily at the shtick of Robin Williams in *Good Morning, Vietnam*, the paternal officer who keeps turning up to soothe the veiny, popeyed Rambo, and the movies' numerous other managerial *dei ex machina* betray the paternalistic bias of the media monopoly—as do those cheering crowds, whose subjugation shows not only in their loud unanimous assent but also in their manifest subject status. In nearly every case those crowds are quaintly working-class or adorably Third World—or else showily grateful citizens, overjoyed to be there in the movie.

Abrupt, illogical, unmotivated, the new happy ending



is, as narrative, a total washout. And that is precisely what it's meant to be: each cheery climax functions not to end the story but to liquefy it. As everybody seems to melt into the spectacle, the "problems" that had kept the story going, however minimally, need no longer be resolved, because this sweetest of all pleasures has *dissolved* them—in the bliss of being in the spectacle, of being, like the stars, lovingly looked up to and watched over.

Thus the movies promise us no distance, no difference—and *no ending*. Made for, and helping to create, an audience that seems to be afraid of time itself, the movies now con-

clude their "narratives" without seeming to terminate them, as if to assure us that the spectacle will never end at all. Such is the implicit promise of the gimmick that now ends, or rather stops, most movies, a gimmick that in film after film follows even the new happy ending, as a bit of (as it were) surplus reassurance: the freeze-frame, whereby the movie actually negates the crucial power of its own cameras to make a keen, enduring record of the passage of time.

An old device, the terminal freeze-frame has enabled countless fraught, suggestive final images, especially since François Truffaut used it to confront us with the wounded gaze of Jean-Pierre L aud at the end of *The 400 Blows* (1958). Powerful freeze-frames end (to name just a few) Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch* (1969), Nicholas Roeg's *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1975), Sydney Pollack's *Three Days of the Condor* (1975), Paul Schraeder's *Blue Collar* (1978)—and yet no such memorable freeze-frame ends any movie in the epoch of revision, although the device has never been so overused. Again and again the convergence freezes at the end—Rocky and Adrian, Mr. Miyagi and the Karate Kid, Long and Midler in *Outrageous Fortune*, Caine and Kingsley in *Without a Clue*, Hines and Baryshnikov in *White Nights*, Gibson and Pfeiffer in *Tequila Sunrise*, Amy Irving and Peter Riegert in *Crossing Delancey*, Arquette and Madonna in *Desperately Seeking Susan*, Elizabeth Shue and her dream date in *Adventures in Babysitting*, Kozlowski and Hogan in *Crocodile Dundee II*.

And if it's not the convergence, then it's just the star himself, his famed face transfixed in a wide, phony smile

(or a real cool smirk), as if posing for a series of publicity shots: John Candy at the end of *Uncle Buck*, Bill Murray at the end of *Stripes*, Prince at the end of *Purple Rain*, Matthew Broderick at the end of *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, Chevy Chase at the end of *Fletch Lives*, Morgan Freeman at the end of *Lean on Me*, Eddie Murphy at the end of *Beverly Hills Cop* and *Beverly Hills Cop 2*.

In every case the movie finally dead-ends into a promotional photo, an image that all at once extols (some) celebrity, denies (your) mortality, and so invites you to identify with that bright entity—like any ad that features someone famous.

"It's Chinatown"

FORMERLY THE MOVIES SOLD A VISION OF UTOPIA, allowing—indeed, exploiting—the impulse to escape into another place: a balmy land of plenty, where the people would be kind (and, in most movies, all the same). This vision often made the movies memorable. In 1939, for instance, the best big productions ended, albeit naively or dishonestly, with their gazes outward, looking past the whole dispiriting mechanism of production toward that place "across the border" where Dallas and the Ringo Kid are headed, or toward that paradise beyond the snows where Heathcliff will love Cathy for all time, or toward Jefferson Smith's rejuvenated nation, or toward that new Union wherein Rhett and Scarlett will now go their separate ways, or toward that homey farm where Dorothy will now find her "heart's desire."

Today's movies offer no utopia, because, they say, everything you'd ever want is here on sale. The movies make this pitch first by concentrating on, and glamorizing, the closed sites of shopping and consumption: nice restaurants and luminous department stores, and the clean and roomy cell wherein the star keeps his or her posters, sweaters, jackets, copper pots, appliances. And the movie makes the pitch by packaging *itself* as a commodity. Like any smoke or Coke or fast-food burger, it is an item whose appeal fails to outlast the moment that it takes to suck it in.

And so going to the movies has become about as memorable as going to the airport. Conceived and sold as "product," just like the many products that it sells, the

movie passes right through you, leaving nothing in you but a vague, angry craving for another one. Today that craving is what keeps the movies going—and so they sell that kind of appetite, that infantile ravenousness, even as they offer you a daydream of your own tremendous strength. Reconsider the famous bat sign that in 1989 sold *Batman* on several million bits of merchandise. Seen the obvious way, that logo is a stylized emblem of the bat in flight, a sign inviting you to think of Batman and to feel yourself as zooming likewise high above the lethal city. Seen another way, it shows the open mouth of an insatiable halfwit: Pac-Man seen from the front, about to take another bite.

But this is much too grim an ending, because the movies at their best have reminded us, forcefully, that things should be otherwise—which is why advertising urges us to laugh them off, to "see right through them." Those movies have to be suppressed, revised, their power forgotten, because they don't just bedazzle us with a blurred, promissory vision of utopia but actually enable us to *see*, through them, the real workings of the very system that produced them, and that is now degrading them and us.

"The cinema is a more or less modern thing, and it ought to be used, now and again, as a means of getting something clear about the life that takes hold of us, and our attempts to pretend that the hold is a handshake." Thus one critic in 1936 expressed the promise of the movies. At times the movies have made good on that promise, by treating us not as wired consumers but respectfully, as persons somehow still outside that system, and so still able to be moved and challenged by its devastations—by the shame and terror of James Allen, chain-gang fugitive, shocked face disappearing into blackness; by the efficient murder of Joanna Eberhardt, killed by and replaced with that "perfect wife" now gliding toward us down the supermarket aisle in sunny Stepford; by the final helplessness of J. J. Gittes, unable to halt the terminal rise of Noah Cross, author of the dark flood gathering over Chinatown; and by the deep, uncomprehending pain of Michael Corleone, who, having finally gained so much and yet lost everything, sits in the dusk behind his big sepulchral house, brooding in the unexpected cold of this clean country and realizing, all alone, that it was not supposed to end like this. □



MAGNIFICATION

BY GUY BILLOUT



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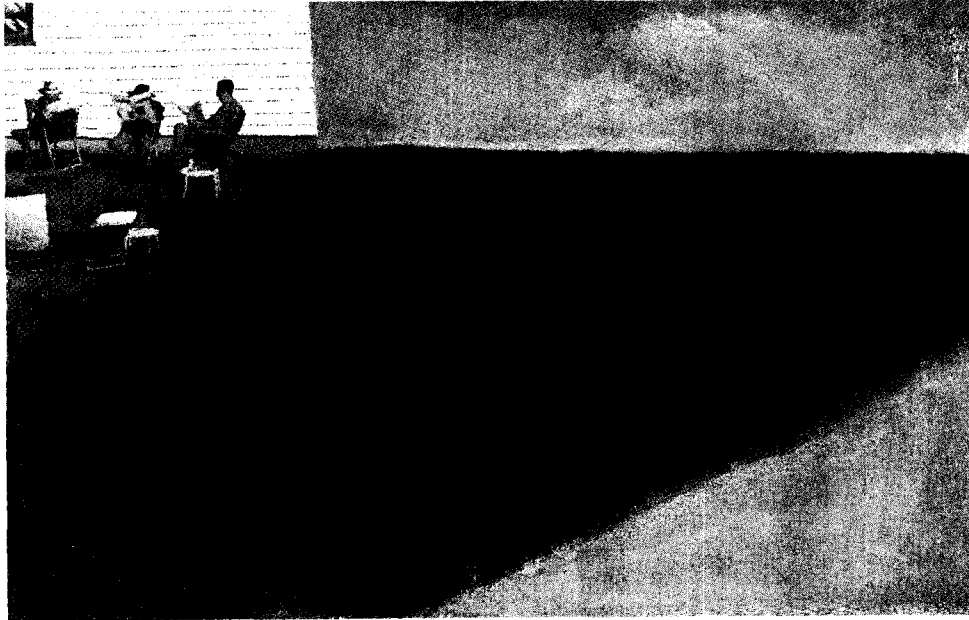
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A Short Story



Outside

by Jessica Treadway



Tom Wheeler had much to forgive, but very little time to act or be understood

THEY WERE ALL SITTING IN THE BACK YARD when Tom Wheeler walked by.

"Don't look now," Ruthie murmured into her *Mademoiselle*. "On the waterline."

They all looked out across the lawn. He had on shorts, a T-shirt, and a white hat with the brim pulled down close around his face. A white towel was bunched at the back of his neck. Even from this distance they could see sweat sliding down his legs.

"He looks just like he did when he used to play tennis." Susan lifted her sunglasses and then pulled them down again discreetly when Tom Wheeler seemed about to turn her way. But instead he moved ahead slowly, on stiff knees.

"He's a lot thinner, though. God, he looks like an old man." Their mother kept watching until Tom Wheeler was out of sight, across the street and farther down the long dirt path covering the water-supply route from the reservoir into town. Between the rows of black raspberries people ran and rode bicycles in the hottest part of the day.

"Who is he?" Susan's husband wanted to know. Every time he slapped at the mosquitoes lighting on his legs, he missed. The women were laughing at him with their eyes.

"Tom Wheeler." Ruthie spoke to the pages of the magazine, which was open to an update on penile implants. She held it tilted at an angle so that her mother wouldn't see. "We used to babysit for them—his kids, I mean. But one summer they just stopped calling." She closed the magazine around her finger and turned her gaze across the grass. "I wonder why that was."

"It was a long time ago," Susan said.

"But what's the matter with him?" Her husband pointed at the waterline with his beer can. It was the Fourth of July, and they were waiting for night. Already, early fireworks sounded from other parts of the town, muted blasts and pops that made them imagine a war was being fought at some distant front.

"Cancer," the women's mother said. "Last summer he went to the doctor because he thought he'd strained his

back on the tennis court. Turned out he had a tumor on his spine, and they gave him a month, at first. Can you imagine? Going in to the doctor for a pulled muscle, and coming out with a month to live?" She clapped vigorously in the air, and when she separated her palms, flakes of mosquito stuck to her skin. The rest of them looked away.

"But he responded to the chemo," she went on, smoothing lotion across her chest. "He's been hanging on for a year now. I saw Caroline at the 7-Eleven the other day, and she said they're planning to bring their girl—Penny, is that her name?—up to Vermont at the end of August. Tom takes pain pills, she said. Long car rides aren't the greatest, but that seems to be his big goal. Get his daughter to college, then come home to die."

"Yuck," Ruthie said. She shivered under the sun.

"Course, that's not how Caroline put it," her mother said. "That's just my take from the clues."

Susan had pulled off her glasses and was sucking on one of the ends. She looked hard at her husband, who was licking Dorito dust from his fingers, until he noticed and looked back at her.

"What?" he said.

"I'm just trying to figure out what it would feel like," Susan said. "Knowing you were going to die. Not knowing when, but watching you get sicker. Weak, like that. Skinny. Like an old man, waiting not to wake up one day." For a moment her intensity made them all hold their breath. Then she put the glasses on and leaned back in her chaise, and the strain of concentration left her face, as if she'd made a decision that relieved her. "No," she said, adjusting her body to get comfortable across the plastic weave. "No way could I handle that."

Her husband squinted, though a cloud was passing overhead. "Well, I'll do my best," he told Susan. "Jeez."

In the house the phone rang. "Dad'll get it," their mother said. A few minutes later Susan and Ruthie's father came out to the yard and stood at the edge of the circle their lawn chairs made by the grill.

"The sun, Dad," Ruthie said, and he stepped back to draw his shadow away from her face.

"Weird phone call," he told them, squatting down in the grass. "It was a tape from the town police. Saying a kid from over on Pearl Road is missing, named Steven Lang. Dressed in shorts and a Florida sweatshirt, red high-tops, six years old. They must be dialing all the numbers for a couple of streets square, so people can keep an eye out."

"Hey, like those advertising tapes," Susan said. "Where you come home at the end of the day, and you think you have all these messages because the machine takes so long to rewind, and when you play it, all you get is that damn robot voice talking about some time-share out on the Cape."

"I never heard of the police doing it, though." Her mother shaded her eyes and peered out across the yard,

in case she might spot the missing child picking raspberries. "What a great idea. I hope he's okay." She looked beyond her husband's shoulder until a wasp fluttered near her hair. When she was finished swatting, she tapped her husband's hand, so he would know she was talking to him, and said, "We're waiting for Tom Wheeler to come back down the line."

He rubbed his eyebrows and stared ahead into his memory. "Hey, whatever happened to them?" he asked his daughters. "One of you used to be over there every Saturday night."

Susan spit back into her glass an ice cube that turned out to be too big. "I guess we fell out of touch," she said.

TOM WHEELER WAS AMAZED AT THE WORLD. With every step he could smell the dry dirt his shoe displaced and sent spreading into the air. He tried, by stopping suddenly a few times, to locate the exact point at which the particles became invisible as they rose from his feet; but they dissolved slyly against his blond shins, as if beating him at a race.

As he moved forward on the path, he was aware of the bugs flying around his face, but by the time he got his hand up to shoo them, they seemed to have either bitten him or flown ahead. The green around him, and the brown under his heels, were sharp one moment and then indistinct, flickery, the next. Dying, or at least his dying, was like that: like driving a car over a hill road, losing a radio signal in the high rock. The way a song came clear at the crest and then passed in and out of static as the car moved up and down through the gray: it was like that. Except that a radio could be fiddled with—turned up in volume, or switched off. Tom had no controls. And when his senses were working, they often came in too strong—he heard things people meant to be secret, or saw details no one else could discern.

He walked slowly, because his legs were sore at the hips and because he was afraid that if he moved too fast he wouldn't notice something he couldn't afford to miss, like a car coming down one of the crossroads, or a kid speeding by on a bike. Three joggers passed him on the waterline, two women and a man; the women did not even look up, and the man turned his face to spit on the other side of the bushes as Tom hurried to get out of his way.

He stopped again by a thick-berried branch. Was he invisible? He ate some of the berries straight off the stems—no point in waiting to wash them, that was a plus. They tasted dusty until he bit in, but the juice was sweet without rinse. He was proud of the care he took to save himself from the thorns.

He turned to watch the joggers receding, their bodies bobbing toward Fairview Drive. He could not believe that they hadn't seen him, but silent intersections didn't surprise him anymore. A year ago, if he had passed the

same man going at the same speed, they would have raised their hands above their heads in a high slap as their courses crossed. Now people moved by him without acknowledging that he was there. It was as if they didn't trust him, because he knew something they could not.

It happened, sometimes, even at home—the other night his daughter had come into the living room to turn on the TV, and Tom, waking from a nap, had to speak up to avoid being sat on. The rest of the family had laughed when he told them about it, but Penny's eyes had turned nervous since then. And his son, Matt, trying to escape admitting what it summoned in all of them, poked Penny and said, "It's not like he's history *yet*." Tom had seen in Matt's face then the most damaging kind of regret, shock at the cruelty that had come from his own tongue. The wound to Tom's soul was not as deep as what he felt for Matt at the same moment—forgiveness, and the knowledge that he would be gone long before Matt ever understood it had been granted. That was what being a father meant, and Tom knew that this, if nothing else, would survive the subversion of his flesh.

Before he left on his walk today, he felt the waiting in Caroline, too. She was sitting in the kitchen, eating ice cream and reading a book. "Why don't you take that outside?" he suggested. "That sun is too nice to be wasted." She didn't answer, but he could sense guilt and irritation in her sigh. And he knew what she was thinking, the truth she would never have said out loud but which they both heard in her silence: *I don't have to hoard anything*. When he left, Penny and Matt were fighting over the television's remote control.

He moved away from the bushes and came in a few steps to the brook before Pearl Road. Every time he approached the brook, and passed above it, he listened to the water rushing over rocks. Even on winter days, when the ground was frozen and the water's path was softened, narrowed by snow, he could hear the small sounds of movement, a wordless whisper, if he stopped walking and the wind was calm. Today the sound was louder than usual, because something was in the brook, something besides stone and silt, causing the flow to rise and splash over its square gray bulk.

A refrigerator was in the stream.

Someone had rolled it end over end down the shallow bank; behind it, through the trees, he could see the trail of drag marks through a back yard on Herber Avenue. The freezer section was open, its handle stuck in the mud. But the refrigerator itself was closed, and a sucking noise ran through the rubber lip. "Whirlpool" shimmered in silver at the surface.

Tom took a slippery step off the path, into the grass, and grabbed a raspberry branch by accident as he lost his foothold. Thorns stabbed at his palms and he swore, stumbling. Then his skin turned cold, not from the wetness in his shoes but at the sight of a piece of cloth, the end of a small shirttail, trapped in the jamb of the door.

On the other side of the refrigerator, he now saw, a child's bicycle lay against the stream bank, its spokes revolving lazily under the humid breeze.

Tom pitched toward the door and pulled at the handle, trying to find some leverage on the wet rocks, but his shoes gave up their grip and he slid down into the stream. The sucking sound increased along the rubber seal. The door sat high, at an angle away from him, and he had to reach across the slick flank to press upward with the useless muscles at the underside of his arms. They felt like twine, not taut but twangy, and his legs ached at the ankles from being twisted by a body too weak for its weight. As he pressed, his eyes lifted to ground level, where he envisioned shoes passing, pausing, and plunging in to offer their help. But it was only a vision; no one walked by.

Where were the joggers? Why weren't the ones who had ignored him coming back on their return trip? And another question, pounding in his temples while the sweat itched and stung at the inside of his lids: why hadn't they seen, as they went by the water, the refrigerator, the bicycle, the fabric wedged in the giant door?

The sky above him was silent, and dust lay on the pathway, waiting to be disturbed. But no one approached. He was alone with water and death. He kicked at the door hinge, heaved again at the handle, shouted, and felt it give. His final strength pried it open; he crawled up and shoved his body into the opening, so that the door couldn't swing shut again.

He took a deep breath, which stalled in his chest when he saw the boy.

The boy had fallen with the dislodging of the door to the refrigerator's back wall, his head curled forward and his fingers tucked under his chin. The chamber smelled sour, like bad milk, and a gagging noise rose in Tom's throat as he reached forward to touch the boy. His fingers jumped at contact with the warm skin of the small arms, and he realized he had expected it to be chilled. He pulled the body out and, without realizing at first what it was, felt the heart vibrating slowly beneath the red shirt, on which he saw an island, blue water, and sand.

The boy's head fell limp on his shoulder, and when Tom moved to step out of the brook, he slammed the huge door back down toward the refrigerator's body. The force made him fall to his knees against the wet stones, but still he held the boy. Using his free hand to help himself up the bank by gripping grass, and then pushing himself up to sit on the level ground, he laid the boy back, with the island facing the sky. Again, before tilting the head and breathing into the slack red mouth, he looked down the trail and saw emptiness at both ends. The path stretched ahead green into curves he had memorized but couldn't, from here, see.

He exhaled into the boy, breath and sound he couldn't control, watching the chest rise under his own pale hand. After a minute the boy's knees rose, bringing his feet in



**“I don’t think Christians
should use birth control.”**

Anti-choice forces want to outlaw abortion for any woman, even in the case of rape or incest.

But they don’t stop there.

They also oppose the use of birth control by millions of American couples.

Randall Terry (photo), one of the men behind the current campaign to blockade health clinics and publicly harass and humiliate women, has stated: “I don’t think Christians should use birth control. You consummate your marriage as often as you like and if you have babies, you have babies.”

Another anti-choice activist declares: “We are totally opposed to abortion under any circumstances...We are also opposed to all forms of birth control with the exception of natural family planning [methods based

on periodic abstinence].”

Other anti-choice zealots denounce contraception as “disgusting,” call the family planning movement “satanic,” and warn that birth control will lead to the death of Western civilization.

These extremists are usually careful to avoid condemning birth control in public. Yet they lobby behind the scenes, and have already succeeded in shaping federal policy and limiting family planning assistance.

The tragedy is that responsible family planning programs do much more to actually avert abortions than anti-choice violence and intimidation ever can.

In fact, restricting Americans’ birth control options will inevitably lead to more crisis pregnancies and more abortions.

That’s the exact opposite of what anti-choice activists say they’re for. Good reason to ask what their leaders are really against.

Make time to save your right to choose. Before the extremists start making your choices for you.

Take action! Here’s my urgent contribution to support Planned Parenthood’s Campaign to Keep Abortion Safe and Legal, 810 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10019-5818.

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close to his body, and he coughed. Tom held the back of the boy's head up then, and as the boy gasped his cheeks lost their bluish cast and his eyes settled into seeing, focusing on Tom's face. He started to cry, until Tom put his hand against the boy's forehead and gave it a gentle press. Tom wanted to smile at him, but caught himself in time; lately, when he smiled at his children, or even at Caroline, they winced in returning the gesture, and when he went to the mirror he understood why. The flesh of his face was like loose wax, shiny over high bones, and his teeth looked dark against the transparency of his lips. But the boy, who was closer than Tom's family got now, didn't seem frightened; and Tom kept his own shadow circling the boy's head until he told Tom he wanted to sit up.

"What happened?" Tom asked him, the words squeezing through his chest. He felt the back of his shorts turning to mud as the water absorbed the dirt they were sitting in. He knew they would have to move on as soon as his breath returned—the boy's skin didn't look right yet, and his chest still made jerky shivers, like a dreaming dog. "What's your name?" Tom said.

The boy hugged himself around the middle. "Steven Theodore Lang," he said quietly, biting into his knee. Then he looked up, and Tom saw confession in his eyes. "I'm not allowed on the waterline, but I heard my mother say a dying guy was out here sometimes. Me and Eric Koone saw somebody dumping that fridge here last night, and it looked like a good place for a dying guy to hide." He coughed again, and Tom felt the violent shaking in his own lungs.

"So I just came down to look while my mother was at the 7-Eleven, but I couldn't see over the edge. I climbed up and fell on something, and I grabbed the door by accident, and it knocked me inside." Steven's chest puckered in spasm at the memory. The word *mother* had drowned in his throat. "I couldn't push it back open. Everything was black, and nobody could hear me." Then his breath shuddered into calm, the fear left his eyes, and the smile he turned up at Tom was like nothing Tom had ever seen before on a child's face, like nothing he had ever felt in his wife's touch, or dared to look for in the part of himself he had only come to recognize in the past year. As he leaned forward to hear the rest of what the boy said, he was aware of a rise under his rib cage, and he remembered with a shock stronger than terror that this sensation was called hope.

"Do you want to know what I was dreaming?"

A chill bit Tom's neck; the towel he had wrapped there at the start of his walk was sopping with sweat and brook water, and he felt it slip on his skin.

"Wait here," he said to Steven, before his lust to know could betray him.

He made a pillow of the towel at the edge of the path. The numbness in his arms told him they wouldn't bear the boy's weight, and there was no one, no one, near them.

HE WALKED AS FAST AS HIS FRAME WOULD CARRY him, brushing by berry branches, breathing in bugs. He strained his eyes looking ahead for the people who'd passed him earlier, and for the first time he remembered, like an old geometry theorem he had learned weakly long ago, that a person traveling in one direction could reach his original place by making a circle instead of returning the way he had come.

When he drew in sight of Fairview Drive, he paused, praying for breath, and before him he could see members of the Bell family, still sitting in their yard. They looked up briefly at the sound of a skyrocket, but only at each other, and not beyond. When he had passed by them earlier, he had waved, but they didn't see him and he felt silly holding his hand up in the air, waiting for them to notice, so he had turned his eyes back to the path and pretended to study the dirt.

He used to drive Ruthie and Susan Bell back to this house after babysitting. He remembered the day he had come home after a tennis game at the Gibsons'—Caroline hung around to help sweep the court—and found one of the girls, he couldn't remember which, touching herself in the bathroom. Matt and Penny were playing outside, and Tom assumed that the babysitter was with them. Kicking open the door with a clay-dusted sock, taking his sweaty shirt off over his head as he moved by instinct toward the shower faucet, he discovered her suddenly. She was sitting on the toilet-seat cover with her shorts down when he turned and saw her, and she sucked in her breath with a shriek, jumped up, yanked at the zipper, and stumbled down the stairs and outside, where (he watched her from the second-story window, after recovering from his own fright) she sprinted up the street and around the corner, toward home. A few days later Caroline told him that the Bell sisters weren't working as babysitters anymore. "She just said something about boyfriends," Caroline said. "I suppose it had to happen sometime."

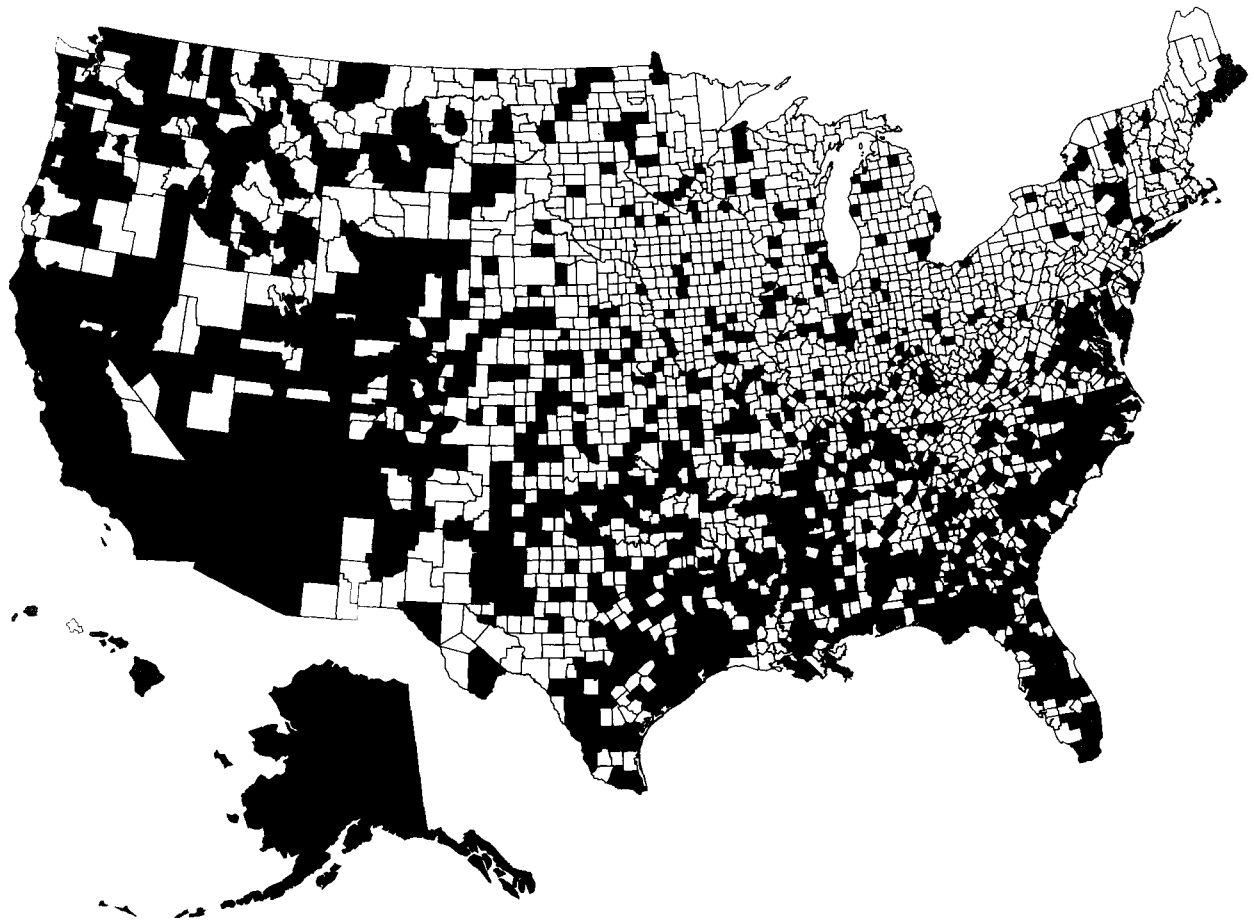
As he approached their circle, he tried in the instant before he called out to imagine what they would see. One of the girls lay on her stomach, with her hair hanging above a magazine; the other reclined under dark glasses, though the sun was behind the trees. Their mother was losing part of a cheeseburger down the front of her bathing suit, and the two men were trying to tune in the Red Sox more clearly.

Coming closer, Tom realized that the girl lying on her back was the one he had surprised in the bathroom seven years ago. He wanted to smile at her, and show that all was forgiven, even funny, in the face of what they fought now. He was opening his mouth to let air in, to tell them what was needed, when he heard her sister mumble over the magazine.

"Don't look now," she said, in a voice he knew she believed he wouldn't hear through meat smoke and the sound of explosion in a far sky. "He's coming." □

AT LAST COUNT

LIES AND EVASIONS



IN THIS WORLD," Benjamin Franklin wrote, "nothing is certain but death and taxes." Yet in Dallam County, Texas, and Prince Georges County, Maryland, the only certainty appears to be death. These counties are among about 400 nationwide where rates of tax delinquency are four percent or greater (the national average is 2.2 percent). In Dallam County in 1983, the most recent year for which detailed data are available, almost 60 percent of all taxpayers who filed returns withheld money properly owed the government.

Tax-delinquent accounts have consistently been found to be disproportionately clustered in the South and West. Why? One reason, a government spokesman speculates, is that people in the South and in what used to be the nation's western frontier are in spirit "a little less inclined to participate in the system." Another reason, he suggests, may be that the rural South and West are home to people who are less likely than other Americans to work for businesses that make automatic payroll deductions. Many rural counties are also poor; some people there simply can't pay

all the taxes that they owe.

Fortunately for the U.S. Treasury, the counties where tax delinquency is the greatest tend to be sparsely populated, and revenue loss is more limited than it otherwise would be. The greatest revenue loss comes from populous counties where rates of tax delinquency are above the national average but moderately so. Fittingly, Washington, D.C., has a higher rate of tax delinquency than the nation's ninety-nine most populous counties.

On the whole, Americans have been getting less honest—2.5 percent less honest in 1983 than they were in 1966, according to an IRS study. Misinformation reported to the IRS about income, adjustments, deductions, and exemptions caused a loss of revenue to the government in 1983 of \$86.3 billion.

LEGEND

Percentage of tax delinquencies by county

- 0 to 2.19 percent
- 2.20 to 4.99 percent
- 5 percent or more

Source: Internal Revenue Service

—Blayne Cutler

*How would a woman who
habitually makes choices in moral terms,
the author asks, come to the decision
to have an abortion?*

A MORAL CHOICE

BY MARY GORDON

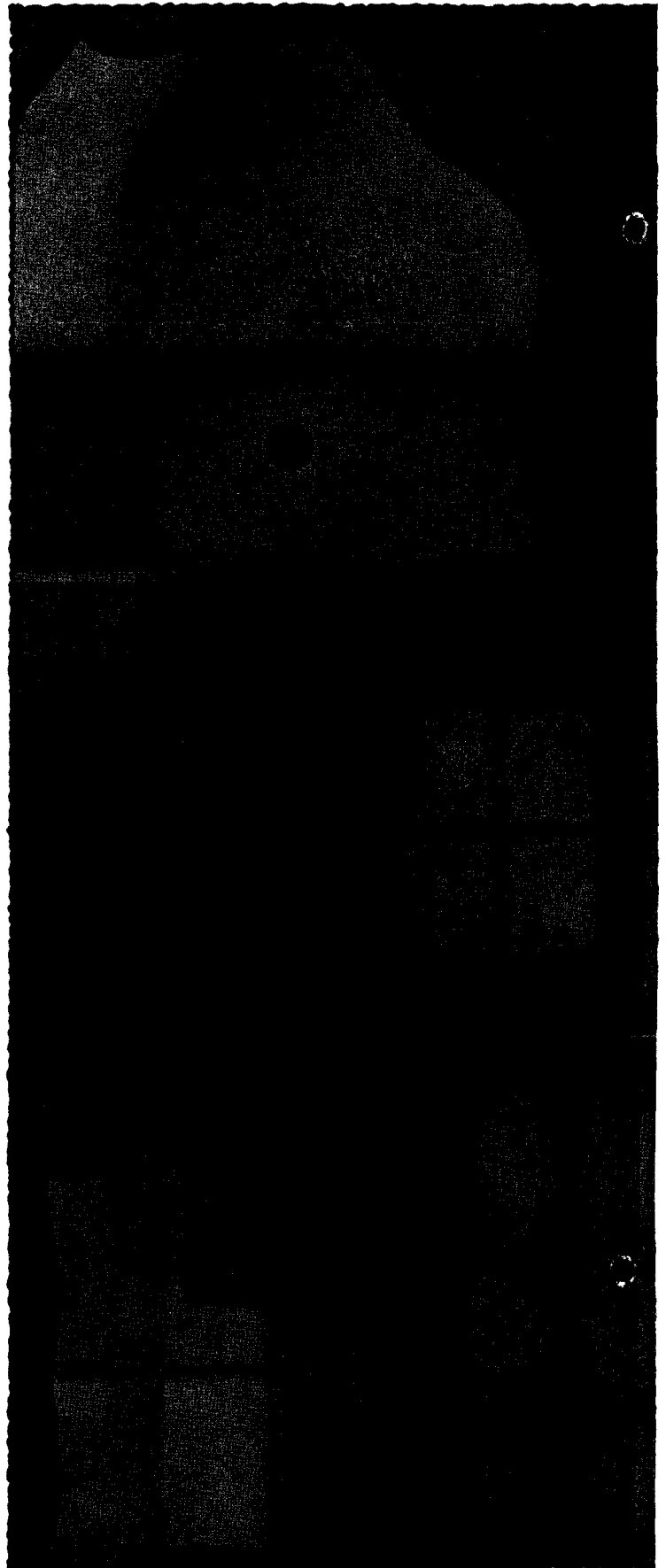


I AM HAVING LUNCH WITH SIX WOMEN. WHAT IS UNUSUAL is that four of them are in their seventies, two of them widowed, the other two living with husbands beside whom they've lived for decades. All of them have had children. Had they been men, they would have published books and hung their paintings on the walls of important galleries. But they are women of a certain generation, and their lives were shaped around their families and personal relations. They are women you go to for help and support. We begin talking about the latest legislative act that makes abortion more difficult for poor women to obtain. An extraordinary thing happens. Each of them talks about the illegal abortions she had during her young womanhood. Not one of them was spared the experience. Any of them could have died on the table of whatever person (not a doctor in any case) she was forced to approach, in secrecy and in terror, to end a pregnancy that she felt would blight her life.

I mention this incident for two reasons: first as a reminder that all kinds of women have always had abortions; second because it is essential that we remember that an abortion is performed on a living woman who has a life in which a terminated pregnancy is only a small part. Morally speaking, the decision to have an abortion doesn't take place in a vacuum. It is connected to other choices that a woman makes in the course of an adult life.

Anti-choice propagandists paint pictures of women who choose to have abortions as types of moral callousness, selfishness, or irresponsibility. The woman choosing to abort is the dressed-for-success yuppie who gets rid of her baby so that she won't miss her Caribbean vacation or her chance for promotion. Or she is the feckless, promiscuous ghetto teenager who couldn't bring herself to

(continued on page 80)



*Pro-choice arguments,
the author says, reflect the ambitions,
hypocrisies, and contradictions
of contemporary feminism*

FEMINISM AND ABORTION

BY MARTHA BAYLES



SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR HAS OBSERVED THAT "ROE v. Wade is on a collision course with itself." Justice O'Connor was referring to medical advances since 1973 that make it easier both to destroy potential life and to preserve it. Her meaning is vividly illustrated by those rare but disturbing cases in which a second- or third-trimester abortion yields a living infant, which must then be either killed or rushed to another part of the hospital for the latest in neonatal care.

But Justice O'Connor could just as well have been referring to the contradictions at the heart of contemporary feminism. Like the majority of Americans, I have reservations about both the pro-choice and the pro-life extremes. But I also feel that there is an imbalance between the degrees of criticism aimed at the two sides: not enough attention has been paid to the twisted logic of pro-choice rhetoric. This essay will try to redress that imbalance, by first sketching the course of recent feminist history and then dissecting some of the hypocrisies and contradictions used by pro-choice advocates to justify the absolute right to abortion.

Contemporary feminism began as a revolt against the traditional female role as it was experienced by the generation of college-educated women who in the 1950s attempted to make a full-time occupation of domesticity. To a large extent it was inspired by Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), which began as a survey of Friedan's former classmates at Smith and grew into a polemic about the psychological frustrations experienced by women who exchanged the relatively egalitarian world of the college campus for the "comfortable concentration camps" of middle-class suburbia. Restless and sometimes envious of their husbands' careers, Friedan's

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A MORAL CHOICE

(continued from page 78)

just say no to sex. A third, purportedly kinder, gentler picture has recently begun to be drawn. The woman in the abortion clinic is there because she is misinformed about the nature of the world. She is having an abortion because society does not provide for mothers and their children, and she mistakenly thinks that another mouth to feed will be the ruin of her family, not understanding that the temporary truth of family unhappiness doesn't stack up beside the eternal verity that abortion is murder. Or she is the dupe of her husband or boyfriend, who talks her into having an abortion because a child will be a drag on his life-style. None of these pictures created by the anti-choice movement assumes that the decision to have an abortion is made responsibly, in the context of a morally lived life, by a free and responsible moral agent.

The Ontology of the Fetus

HOW WOULD A WOMAN WHO HABITUALLY MAKES choices in moral terms come to the decision to have an abortion? The moral discussion of abortion centers on the issue of whether or not abortion is an act of murder. At first glance it would seem that the answer should follow directly upon two questions: Is the fetus human? and Is it alive? It would be absurd to deny that a fetus is alive or that it is human. What would our other options be—to say that it is inanimate or belongs to another species? But we habitually use the terms “human” and “live” to refer to parts of our body—“human hair,” for example, or “live red-blood cells”—and we are clear in our understanding that the nature of these objects does not rank equally with an entire personal existence. It then seems important to consider whether the fetus, this alive human thing, is a *person*, to whom the term “murder” could sensibly be applied. How would anyone come to a decision about something so impalpable as personhood? Philosophers have struggled with the issue of personhood, but in language that is so abstract that it is unhelpful to ordinary people making decisions in the course of their lives. It might be more productive to begin thinking about the status of the fetus by examining the language and customs that surround it. This approach will encourage us to focus on the choosing, acting woman, rather than the act of abortion—as if the act were performed by abstract forces without bodies, histories, attachments.

This focus on the acting woman is useful because a pregnant woman has an identifiable, consistent ontology, and a fetus takes on different ontological identities over time. But common sense, experience, and linguistic usage point clearly to the fact that we habitually consider, for example, a seven-week-old fetus to be different from a seven-month-old one. We can tell this by the way we

respond to the involuntary loss of one as against the other. We have different language for the experience of the involuntary expulsion of the fetus from the womb depending upon the point of gestation at which the experience occurs. If it occurs early in the pregnancy, we call it a miscarriage; if late, we call it a stillbirth.

We would have an extreme reaction to the reversal of those terms. If a woman referred to a miscarriage at seven weeks as a stillbirth, we would be alarmed. It would shock our sense of propriety; it would make us uneasy; we would find it disturbing, misplaced—as we do when a bag lady sits down in a restaurant and starts shouting, or an octogenarian arrives at our door in a sailor suit. In short, we would suspect that the speaker was mad. Similarly, if a doctor or a nurse referred to the loss of a seven-month-old fetus as a miscarriage, we would be shocked by that person's insensitivity: could she or he not understand that a fetus that age is not what it was months before?

Our ritual and religious practices underscore the fact that we make distinctions among fetuses. If a woman took the bloody matter—indistinguishable from a heavy period—of an early miscarriage and insisted upon putting it in a tiny coffin and marking its grave, we would have serious concerns about her mental health. By the same token, we would feel squeamish about flushing a seven-month-old fetus down the toilet—something we would quite normally do with an early miscarriage. There are no prayers for the matter of a miscarriage, nor do we feel there should be. Even a Catholic priest would not baptize the issue of an early miscarriage.

The difficulties stem, of course, from the odd situation of a fetus's ontology: a complicated, differentiated, and nuanced response is required when we are dealing with an entity that changes over time. Yet we are in the habit of making distinctions like this. At one point we know that a child is no longer a child but an adult. That this question is vexed and problematic is clear from our difficulty in determining who is a juvenile offender and who is an adult criminal and at what age sexual intercourse ceases to be known as statutory rape. So at what point, if any, do we on the pro-choice side say that the developing fetus is a person, with rights equal to its mother's?

The anti-choice people have one advantage over us; their monolithic position gives them unity on this question. For myself, I am made uneasy by third-trimester abortions, which take place when the fetus could live outside the mother's body, but I also know that these are extremely rare and often performed on very young girls who have had difficulty comprehending the realities of pregnancy. It seems to me that the question of late abortions should be decided case by case, and that fixation on this issue is a deflection from what is most important: keeping early abortions, which are in the majority by far, safe and legal. I am also politically realistic enough to suspect that bills restricting late abortions are not good-faith

attempts to make distinctions about the nature of fetal life. They are, rather, the cynical embodiments of the hope among anti-choice partisans that technology will be on their side and that medical science's ability to create situations in which younger fetuses are viable outside their mothers' bodies will increase dramatically in the next few years. Ironically, medical science will probably make the issue of abortion a minor one in the near future. The RU-486 pill, which can induce abortion early on, exists, and whether or not it is legally available (it is not on the market here, because of pressure from anti-choice groups), women will begin to obtain it. If abortion can occur through chemical rather than physical means, in the privacy of one's home, most people not directly involved will lose interest in it. As abortion is transformed from a public into a private issue, it will cease to be perceived as political; it will be called personal instead.

An Equivocal Good

BUT BECAUSE ABORTION will always deal with what it is to create and sustain life, it will always be a moral issue. And whether we like it or not, our moral thinking about abortion is rooted in the shifting soil of perception. In an age in which much of our perception is manipulated by media that specialize in the sound bite and the photo op, the anti-choice partisans have a twofold advantage over us on the pro-choice side. The pro-choice moral position is more complex, and the experience we defend is physically repellent to contemplate. None of us in the pro-choice movement would suggest that abortion is not a regrettable occurrence. Anti-choice proponents can offer pastel photographs of babies in buntings, their eyes peaceful in the camera's gaze. In answer, we can't offer the material of an early abortion, bloody, amorphous in a paper cup, to prove that what has just been removed from the woman's body is not a child, not in the same category of being as the adorable bundle in an adoptive mother's arms. It is not a pleasure to look at the physical evidence of abortion, and most of us don't get the opportunity to do so.

The theologian Daniel Maguire, uncomfortable with the fact that most theological arguments about the nature of abortion are made by men who have never been any-

where near an actual abortion, decided to visit a clinic and observe abortions being performed. He didn't find the experience easy, but he knew that before he could in good conscience make a moral judgment on abortion, he needed to experience through his senses what an aborted fetus is like: he needed to look at and touch the controversial entity. He held in his hand the bloody fetal stuff; the eight-week-old fetus fit in the palm of his hand, and it certainly bore no resemblance to either of his two children when he had held them moments after their birth. He knew at that point what women who have experienced early abortions and miscarriages know: that some event occurred, possibly even a dramatic one, but it was not the death of a child.

Because issues of pregnancy and birth are both physical and metaphorical, we

must constantly step back and forth between ways of perceiving the world. When we speak of gestation, we are often talking in terms of potential, about events and objects to which we attach our hopes, fears, dreams, and ideals. A mother can speak to the fetus in her uterus and name it; she and her mate may decorate a nursery according to their vision of the good life; they may choose for an embryo a college, a profession, a dwelling. But those of us who are trying to think morally about pregnancy and birth must remember that these feelings are our own projections onto what is in reality an inappropriate object. However charmed we

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may be by an expectant father's buying a little football for something inside his wife's belly, we shouldn't make public policy based on such actions, nor should we force others to live their lives conforming to our fantasies.

As a society, we are making decisions that pit the complicated future of a complex adult against the fate of a mass of cells lacking cortical development. The moral pressure should be on distinguishing the true from the false, the real suffering of living persons from our individual and often idiosyncratic dreams and fears. We must make decisions on abortion based on an understanding of how people really do live. We must be able to say that poverty is worse than not being poor, that having dignified and meaningful work is better than working in conditions of degradation, that raising a child one loves and has desired is better than raising a child in resentment

and rage, that it is better for a twelve-year-old not to endure the trauma of having a child when she is herself a child.

When we put these ideas against the ideas of "child" or "baby," we seem to be making a horrifying choice of lifestyle over life. But in fact we are telling the truth of what it means to bear a child, and what the experience of abortion really is. *This is extremely difficult, for the object of the discussion is hidden, changing, potential.* We make our decisions on the basis of approximate and inadequate language, often on the basis of fantasies and fears. It will always be crucial to try to separate genuine moral concern from phobia, punitiveness, superstition, anxiety, a desperate search for certainty in an uncertain world.

One of the certainties that is removed if we accept the consequences of the pro-choice position is the belief that the birth of a child is an unequivocal good. In real life we act knowing that the birth of a child is not always a good thing: people are sometimes depressed, angry, rejecting, at the birth of a child. But this is a difficult truth to tell; we don't like to say it, and one of the fears preyed on by anti-choice proponents is that if we cannot look at the birth of a child as an unequivocal good, then there is nothing to look toward. The desire for security of the imagination, for typological fixity, particularly in the area of "the good," is an understandable desire. It must seem to some anti-choice people that we on the pro-choice side are not only murdering innocent children but also murdering hope. Those of us who have experienced the birth of a desired child and felt the joy of that moment can be tempted into believing that it was the physical experience of the birth itself that was the joy. But it is crucial to remember that the birth of a child itself is a neutral occurrence emotionally: the charge it takes on is invested in it by the people experiencing or observing it.

The Fear of Sexual Autonomy

THESE UNCERTAINTIES CAN LEAD TO ANOTHER set of fears, not only about abortion but about its implications. Many anti-choice people fear that to support abortion is to cast one's lot with the cold and technological rather than with the warm and natural, to head down the slippery slope toward a brave

new world where handicapped children are left on mountains to starve and the old are put out in the snow. But if we look at the history of abortion, we don't see the embodiment of what the anti-choice proponents fear. On the contrary, excepting the grotesque counterexample of the People's Republic of China (which practices forced abortion), there seems to be a real link between repressive anti-abortion stances and repressive governments. Abortion was banned in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany; it is illegal in South Africa and in Chile. It is paid for by the governments of Denmark, England, and the Netherlands, which have national health and welfare systems that foster the health and well-being of mothers, children, the old, and the handicapped.

Advocates of outlawing abortion often refer to women seeking abortion as self-indulgent and materialistic. In fact these accusations mask a discomfort with female sexuality, sexual pleasure, and sexual autonomy. It is possible for a woman to have a sexual life unriddled by fear only if she can be confident that she need not pay for a failure of technology or judgment (and who among us has never once been swept away in the heat of a sexual moment?) by taking upon herself the crushing burden of unchosen motherhood.

It is no accident, therefore, that the increased appeal of measures to restrict maternal conduct during pregnancy—and a new focus on the physical autonomy of the pregnant woman—have come into public discourse at precisely the time when women are achieving unprecedented levels of economic and political autonomy. What has surprised me is that some of this new anti-autonomy talk comes to us from the left. An example of this new discourse is an article by Christopher Hitchens that appeared in *The Nation* last April, in which the author asserts his discomfort with abortion. Hitchens's tone is impeccably British: arch, light, we're men of the left.

Anyone who has ever seen a sonogram or has spent even an hour with a textbook on embryology knows that the emotions are not the deciding factor. In order to terminate a pregnancy, you have to still a heartbeat, switch off a developing brain, and whatever the method, break some bones and rupture some organs. As to whether this involves pain on the "Silent Scream" scale, I have

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no idea. The "right to life" leadership, again, has cheapened everything it touches.

"It is a pity," Hitchens goes on to say, "that . . . the majority of feminists and their allies have stuck to the dead ground of 'Me Decade' possessive individualism, an ideology that has more in common than it admits with the prehistoric right, which it claims to oppose but has in fact encouraged." Hitchens proposes, as an alternative, a program of social reform that would make contraception free and support a national adoption service. In his opinion, it would seem, women have abortions for only two reasons: because they are selfish or because they are poor. If the state will take care of the economic problems and the bureaucratic messiness around adoption, it remains only for the possessive individualists to get their act together and walk with their babies into the communal utopia of the future. Hitchens would allow victims of rape or incest to have free abortions, on the grounds that since they didn't choose to have sex, the women should not be forced to have the babies. This would seem to put the issue of volition in a wrong and telling place. To Hitchens's mind, it would appear, if a woman chooses to have sex, she can't choose whether or not to have a baby. The implications of this are clear. If a woman is consciously and volitionally sexual, she should be prepared to take her medicine. And what medicine must the consciously sexual male take? Does Hitchens really believe, or want us to believe, that every male who has unintentionally impregnated a woman will be involved in the lifelong responsibility for the upbringing of the engendered child? Can he honestly say that he has observed this behavior—or, indeed, would want to see it observed—in the world in which he lives?

Real Choices

IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR A MORAL DECISION ABOUT ABORTION to be made in an atmosphere of open, critical thinking. We on the pro-choice side must accept that there are indeed anti-choice activists who take their position in good faith. I believe, however, that they are people for whom childbirth is an emotionally overladen topic, people who are susceptible to unclear thinking because of their unrealistic hopes and fears. It is important for us in the pro-choice movement to be open in discussing those areas involving abortion which are nebulous and unclear. But we must not forget that there are some things that we know to be undeniably true. There are some undeniable bad consequences of a woman's being forced to bear a child against her will. First is the trauma of going through a pregnancy and giving birth to a child who is not desired, a trauma more long-lasting than that experienced by some (only some) women who experience an early abortion. The grief of giving up a child at its birth—and at nine months it is a child whom one has felt

move inside one's body—is underestimated both by anti-choice partisans and by those for whom access to adoptable children is important. This grief should not be forced on any woman—or, indeed, encouraged by public policy.

We must be realistic about the impact on society of millions of unwanted children in an overpopulated world. Most of the time, human beings have sex not because they want to make babies. Yet throughout history sex has resulted in unwanted pregnancies. And women have always aborted. One thing that is not hidden, mysterious, or debatable is that making abortion illegal will result in the deaths of women, as it has always done. Is our historical memory so short that none of us remember aunts, sisters, friends, or mothers who were killed or rendered sterile by septic abortions? Does no one in the anti-choice movement remember stories or actual experiences of midnight drives to filthy rooms from which aborted women were sent out, bleeding, to their fate? Can anyone genuinely say that it would be a moral good for us as a society to return to those conditions?

Thinking about abortion, then, forces us to take moral positions as adults who understand the complexities of the world and the realities of human suffering, to make decisions based on how people actually live and choose, and not on our fears, prejudices, and anxieties about sex and society, life and death. □

FEMINISM AND ABORTION

(continued from page 79)

"trapped housewives" wanted to pursue the basically liberal goal of freedom and autonomy on an equal basis with men. Soon a movement arose to break out of the stifling private sphere inhabited by females and enter the breezy public forum dominated by males.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the forum. Try as they would, the feminists of the 1960s and 1970s could not extirpate the reality of gender differences. For the radical fringe, the persistence of such differences was proof that female oppression was the most deeply ingrained injustice in history—"metaphysical cannibalism," Ti-Grace Atkinson called it. But mainstream feminists did not feel drawn to this sisterhood, which was based on hatred for the essential experiences of womanhood. Beginning in the universities, many of them sought ways to accept gender differences without sacrificing equality.

From Equality to Superiority

THESE EFFORTS AT FIRST HAD AN UNASSAILABLE logic. Objecting that the apocalyptic visions of the radicals dehumanized women as passive victims, scholars in the field of women's studies began upgrading the image of traditional womanhood in history, literature, and the social sciences. The politi-

cal philosopher Jean Bethke Elshtain describes the process this way:

Another strain of feminist thought, best called "difference feminism," questioned the move towards full assimilation of female identity with public male identity and argued that to see women's traditional roles and activities as *wholly* oppressive was itself oppressive to women, denying them historic subjectivity and moral agency.

For some feminists, this upgrading led to a new acceptance of domesticity. For others, it led to a new and more subtle radicalism, as they persuaded first themselves and then the university that the differences between the sexes extended to modes of thinking—not just in women's studies but in every other subject, from aardvarks to zymology. And lest this new difference be confused with the old one that relegated women to mental inferiority, a number of scholars were on hand to suggest that the female mode was superior.

One influential book was the psychologist Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* (1982). Gilligan concluded, from a study of moral reasoning in both sexes, that men reason from public-oriented ideas of individual rights and fair play, while women reason from private-oriented ideas of responsibility and caring for others. When the book was published, some of Gilligan's Harvard colleagues observed that this distinction—between justice and mercy, broadly construed—is as old as the Western philosophical tradition. At the same time, other scholars were reminding feminists that an idealized notion of nurturing, peace-loving womanhood was the keystone of both the nineteenth-century bourgeois family and the "moral uplift" movement that spawned helping professions like social work.

But these comparisons were spurned by those academic feminists who preferred to believe that social science had proved the existence of a separate, and morally superior, female mind with a distinctive set of values. Once upon a time university women had argued that scientific reason had no gender, and that aesthetic imagination was androgynous. But no longer. It wasn't in their interest. Instead, they had every incentive, material and otherwise, to join the feminist guild and subscribe to this new strain of feminist thought—best called "superiority

feminism." Here feminism took an unfortunate turn, because a sense of superiority is hard to control. It is one thing to upgrade the image of heroines in Victorian novels, and quite another to adjust your opinion of unliberated housewives, Bible-quoting ministers, and conservative Republicans lobbying against the Equal Rights Amendment.

When it comes to politics, feminists still claim today, as Friedan claimed in 1963, that the frustration of the few is shared by the many. Yet even back in 1963 this claim was mistaken, because the peculiarly stifling circumstances described in *The Feminine Mystique* simply didn't obtain for most women. And today, despite a rise in female employment and a decline in family stability, there are still a great many women who spend their married

lives in the same community where they grew up, who don't aspire to college and career, and, perhaps most important, who don't envy their husbands' work experience. The majority of men and women who must earn their living in ways that are not especially stimulating or enriching still embrace the ideal (if not always the reality) of women's providing for their families what Christopher Lasch has called a "haven in a heartless world."

To sum up, in the family and the workplace feminists deny the legitimacy of gender-based divisions of labor. "We are individuals," they intone, "and our role in homemaking and breadwinning must be identical to that of men." In the academy, however, feminists deny the possibility of gender-free research. "We are women," they intone, "and our values and thought processes are different from and better than those of men." For a long time this inconsistency showed up only when an especially ornery antifeminist—or perhaps the house-husband of a professor of women's studies—compared the two separate spheres. But today it shows up in the heat of political debate, as pro-choice activists switch back and forth between the two kinds of feminism to defend the absolute right to abortion. Few activists take time to ponder the contradiction between a feminism that denies gender and one that institutionalizes it. Like most political actors, they use rhetoric for its persuasiveness, not its logic. But as I hope to show in my discussion of pro-choice reasoning, doublethink is not all that persuasive.

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WADE ABORTION
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PHRASE, "MORE
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Who Owns Whose Flesh?

THE ORIGINAL PRO-CHOICE ARGUMENT IS ROOTED in the classical liberal affirmation of every man's right to own his own body. Critical of liberalism for its failure to extend this right equally to women, pro-choicers define abortion as the essence of every woman's right to own her own body. In *Abortion & The Politics of Motherhood*, Kristin Luker's 1984 study of attitudes on both sides of the abortion debate, one activist put it this way: "we can get all the rights in the world . . . and none of them means a doggone thing if we don't own the flesh we stand in."

The obvious objection to this argument is that a fetus is not just part of a woman's body. For a while pro-choicers tried to meet this objection by dehumanizing the fetus. Some still do. For example, Jane Hodgson, the Minnesota physician who is currently challenging that state's parental-notification law before the Supreme Court, told *The Washington Post* that one way to reassure a patient after a first-trimester abortion is to show her the pan of "uterine contents." Dr. Hodgson also refers to the object of such a procedure as "a few embryonic cells." By using such phrases the seventy-four-year-old Hodgson is echoing the tones of an earlier era. In the face of the passionate rhetoric of the pro-life movement, to say nothing of public opinion, which has never wavered in its support of tighter restrictions on later abortions (a position that does not deny the fetus humanity so much as assign it greater weight as it becomes more likely to develop into a child), pro-choice activists have nothing to gain from using such clinical and dehumanizing language.

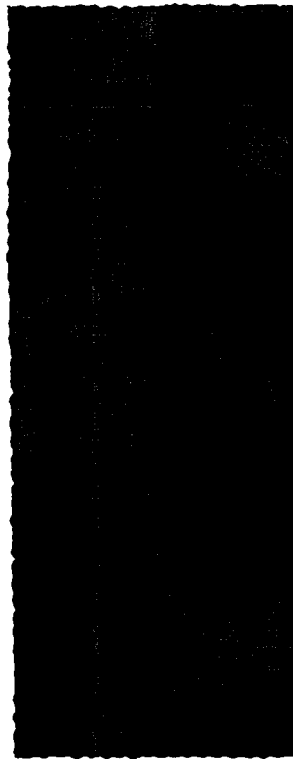
The more up-to-date pro-choice arguments are rooted in superiority feminism's elevation of the "private" morality of women over the "public" morality of men. In this spirit pro-choicers define abortion as an intensely *personal* experience that no man can judge. Bella Abzug anticipated this view in 1980 when she attacked Jimmy Carter's "'personal' objections to abortion" as "biologically inappropriate." With this phrase Abzug reveals the bogus logic of declaring the subject of abortion off limits to men. Since when has biology determined the arenas in which human beings can make moral judgments?

PRO-CHOICE
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In a similar vein pro-choicers define abortion as a family matter that is no business of politicians'. Thus the claim, made before the Supreme Court by the American Civil Liberties Union, that the Minnesota law requiring notification of both parents in cases of teenage abortion "tramples on the integrity of families." And thus Planned Parenthood's insistence that cuts in federal funding for abortion counseling are "an outrageous assault on the American family."

To clarify the doublethink in such rhetoric, consider the language used by the Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court last year in ruling against two pro-life activists who tried to prevent an abortion on a comatose woman named Nancy Klein. The abortion had been sought by Klein's husband, in consultation with her parents and her doctor, in the hope that it would increase her chances of recovery. The court said that "absolute strangers to the Klein family, whatever their motivation, have no place in this family tragedy."

Appropriate though this language may be to the unhappy case of Nancy Klein, it is also misleading, in exactly the same way that the pro-choice activists' pro-family, anti-government rhetoric is misleading. "Absolute strangers" are not the only people who "have no place" in abortion decisions. If Klein had not been in a coma, she would have been legally entitled to decide between destroying and preserving this particular unborn life without consulting either its father or its grandparents. All the pro-family rhetoric in the world cannot change this blunt fact. After *Roe v. Wade* abortion is not a family decision. It is the decision of one class of individuals—pregnant women—who have been designated, in Orwell's pithy phrase, "more equal than others."



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The Materfamilias

GRANTED, THERE IS NOTHING NEW ABOUT VESTING a class of people with life-or-death power over their families. Such is the original definition of patriarchy. In ancient Rome, for example, a great many political, economic, and religious powers resided in the male heads of tribes, clans, and

households. Among these was the power to commit infanticide. If a newborn was deemed healthy and supportable by the paterfamilias, it was initiated into the family with the proper rites. If not, it was smothered or drowned.

In Rome infanticide was not considered murder, any more than abortion is considered murder by the majority of Americans today. But the Romans regarded infanticide as a very grave act, which is why it could be performed only by the paterfamilias. In the sense that our present abortion law vests the pregnant woman with the power to commit a similarly grave act, it's tempting to dub her the "materfamilias." But of course she is nothing of the kind. The stern powers of the paterfamilias were fused with stern duties, such as atoning for crimes committed by the members of his household. In the organic metaphor we've inherited from the Romans (by way of Christian views of natural law), the "members" and the "heads" of families and other social institutions are bound by ties so powerful that they can be severed only by a kind of amputation.

Since the seventeenth century this organic metaphor has been challenged by liberalism's depiction of social institutions not as organisms made up of consanguine parts but as contractual arrangements between consenting individuals. The feminists' complaint against liberalism is that it has never, despite its contractual ethos, stopped conceiving of the family as an organic institution. As the political philosopher Susan Moller Okin has put it, liberalism still takes a "prescriptive view of woman's nature and proper mode of life based on her role and functions in a patriarchal family structure." That is why the chief goal of feminists like Okin is to restructure the family as a totally contractual arrangement from which anyone, but especially any woman, may withdraw at will.

But is this goal morally defensible? There's a very good reason why liberalism has never stopped seeing the family as an organic institution. Beginning with John Locke, liberalism has understood that not all human ties are contractual—most notably the tie between a parent and a child. Locke distinguished between legitimate political power, which may extend to life and death because it derives from the consent of the governed, and parental power, which may extend only to preserving the life of the child, because it does not, and cannot, derive from the consent of the child.

This crucial distinction collapses every time pro-choice arguments flip-flop between the language of individual rights and that of nurturant femininity. Pro-choicers begin by asserting equal rights for women—a line of reasoning that challenges the organic basis of family relationships. But equal rights are not enough when it comes to abortion, a decision that must balance women's rights against those of others, such as fetuses and family members. So pro-choicers define women's rights as more than equal, on the grounds that female decision-making

partakes of a special moral wisdom. But what is the source of that wisdom? Not women's character or achievement as individuals but their membership in a class whose nature it is to care for others—a definition of womanhood that is nothing if not organic.

Bring on the Bull

BY SUCH MANEUVERING, PRO-CHOICE ADVOCATES can usually avoid admitting that the relationship between a woman and a fetus is not contractual. But if not contractual, then it must be organic—an outcome that leaves pro-choicers with only two options. They can deny the humanity of the fetus, which (as we've seen) is both unpopular and unproductive. Or they can change the subject.

Because the comparison between maternal and fetal consent favors the fetus, the logical solution is to shift to a comparison that favors the woman—that is, between the degrees of consent exercised by men and women having sex. In its wisdom (which has remained remarkably consistent over the years), public opinion tolerates legal abortion in cases of coercive sex, such as rape and incest. But this consensus isn't good enough for those pro-choice activists who have an overriding rhetorical need to stress female, as opposed to fetal, helplessness. Their hypocrisy peaks when, after granting women life-and-death power over the unborn, they depict sexual relations as beyond women's control—in rhetoric that harks back to the old militant equation of sex and rape, as expressed by the activist who told Kristin Luker that without abortion, women would have "about as many rights as the cow in the pasture that's taken to the bull once a year."

This is not to suggest that the activists counsel sexual restraint. Like most "progressive" people, they have a horror of appearing prudish. Nor do they want to revive the old double standard that gave men more sexual liberty than women. Yet their dislike of male irresponsibility makes it tricky to advocate similar behavior in women. Perforce, they resolve the conflict by taking the "me first" ethic of the sexual revolution and cloaking it in the "caring" verbiage of superiority feminism. Here is Luker's summary of the pro-choice view of sex:

Because mobilizing such delicate social and emotional resources as trust, caring, and intimacy requires *practice*, pro-choice people do not denigrate sexual experiences that fall short of achieving transcendence. They judge individual cases of premarital sex, contraception, and infidelity according to the ways in which they enhance or detract from conditions of trust and caring. In their value scheme, something that gives people opportunities for intimacy simply cannot be seen as wrong.

Does this mean that when Hank Williams sang "Your Cheatin' Heart," he was really singing about a practice mobilization of delicate trusting and caring resources by a

person given an opportunity for intimacy? More likely, Hank meant that the human objects of trust, caring, and intimacy shouldn't be batted around for practice, like so many interchangeable tennis balls. Since the main purpose of such verbiage is to rationalize self-indulgence, it's no wonder that such verbiage also dominates feminist discussions of the higher morality of abortion.

Family Pictures

TAKE CAROL GILLIGAN'S PIVOTAL STUDY OF "concepts of self and morality" in a group of women considering abortion. There's nothing objectionable about her claim that women faced with unwanted pregnancies tend to weigh "selfishness" against "responsibility." But there's plenty objectionable about her tortured efforts to interpret abortion as *always a responsible decision*. According to her discussion, the women who were Catholic concluded that the "honesty and truth" of their own desires was worth more than the Catholic "conventions that equate goodness with self-sacrifice." The single women, mired in dead-end affairs with exploitative Don Juans, decided that destroying their lovers' potential offspring was a way of affirming their self-esteem. And one twenty-nine-year-old married woman reasoned that it was selfish to bear her child and adult to abort it.

In Gilligan's view, a woman is not permitted to put the needs of other people first, because "self-sacrifice" is the linchpin of female oppression. Instead, she is expected to ascend to a higher level of enlightened self-regard, where the act of putting her own needs first is tantamount to striking a blow for women's freedom. But what if the other people involved are also women? Consider the scenario of the pregnant teenager who decides, against the wishes of her mother, to abort a female fetus. In the one instance, she is depriving an older female of a grandchild. In the other, she is depriving a younger female of life. Compared with such deprivations, the idea of striking a blow for women's freedom seems pretty abstract, impersonal, and public—rather like Gilligan's stereotype of male moral reasoning.

The above scenario may not be typical, but neither is it as lurid as the picture of the American family currently being drawn by pro-choice activists opposing the various state laws that are trying, in the wake of the Supreme Court's *Webster* decision, to restore the attenuated interests of other family members in the life of the unborn. Again, the goal of pro-choice rhetoric is to emphasize female helplessness. But because the battleground is now the family itself, the rhetoric of abuse and violation gets applied to the parents of minors seeking abortions. In a

full-page ad in *The New York Times*, Planned Parenthood explains "What's Wrong With Parental Consent" as follows: "Indeed, after hearing evidence of family conflict and brutal violence, an appeals judge wrote 'compelling parental notice . . . is almost always disastrous.'"

Never mind the deliberate confusion of "parental consent" with "parental notice." Just look at the model of family life offered by pro-choice activists and their allies as the basis for law. On the one hand, minors should have complete sexual license, because younger people need to practice those all-important skills of trust, caring, and intimacy. On the other hand, parents should be kept in the dark, because older people cannot be trusted to refrain from brutal violence. A favorite variation on this theme is the tale of the molesting father who murders his daughter after learning that she is pregnant with his child. The activists don't want the law to make provisions for these grim exceptions; they want it to enshrine them as the rule.

Fewer Females?

WE NOW ARRIVE AT THE REAL LEGACY OF FEMINIST doublethink, with its contempt for the values of the unliberated majority and its misplaced faith in the superiority of female moral reasoning. Substitute "feminist superiority" for "female superiority," and the actual tendency of the movement becomes clear. Not only does feminist doublethink accord women the exclusive power to terminate potential life while absolving them of any responsibility for having conceived life in the first place; this doublethink also extends its influence, by way of the helping professionals and judges under its sway, over the poor, the confused, and the underaged, who are urged to heed the feminist message over the advice of their own families.

Nor is this power being exercised in the name of a clearly defined kinship group, as was the power of the Roman paterfamilias. Rather it is being wielded in the name of all women, a category that includes not only the majority of people who disagree with the pro-choice position on abortion but also half the potential lives being aborted. It's a measure of feminist fanaticism that only recently have pro-choice activists announced their unwillingness to defend abortion as a method of sex selection. Perhaps it occurred to them that sex-preferential practices have historically favored the male, and that by sanctioning such abortions, they are quite likely causing fewer females to be born. If this was their reasoning, then it's time to stand back and watch feminism collide with itself. □

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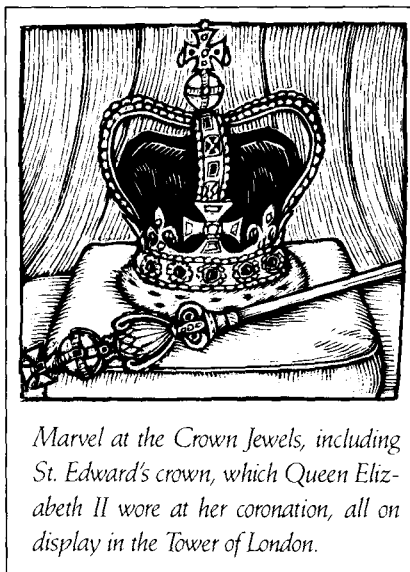
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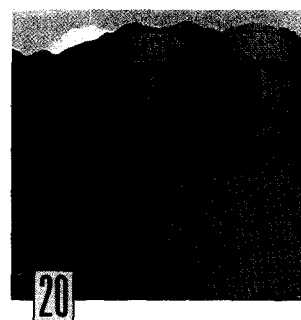
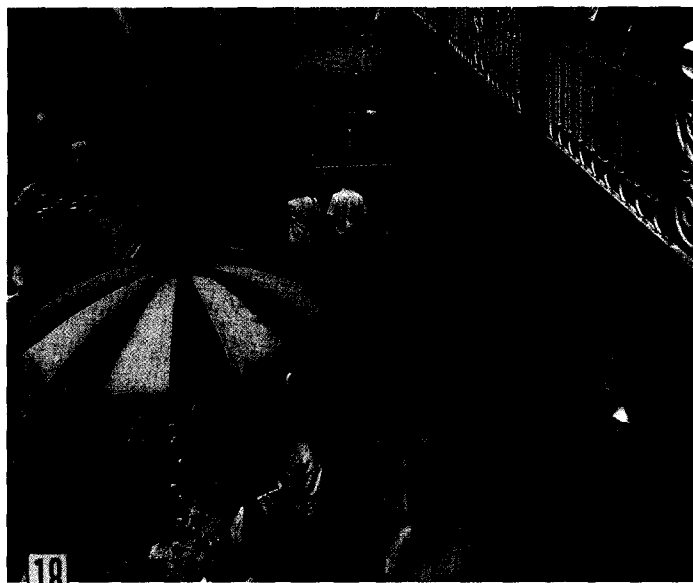
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EUROPE



"If friends from abroad came to visit, how would you suggest they spend a day or a week in your city, or country, or region?" A variety of accomplished Europeans were both game and generous enough to answer this question for us; what they said makes up the substance of this supplement.

Although *The Atlantic* has been publishing occasional travel supplements for fifteen years, this is the first in the new "Inquisitive Traveler" series. Each of the "Inquisitive Traveler" supplements over the course of a year will focus on a different part of the world, and will do so through the eyes of interesting people who are at home there. It is their hope, and ours, that you'll feel at home there too.

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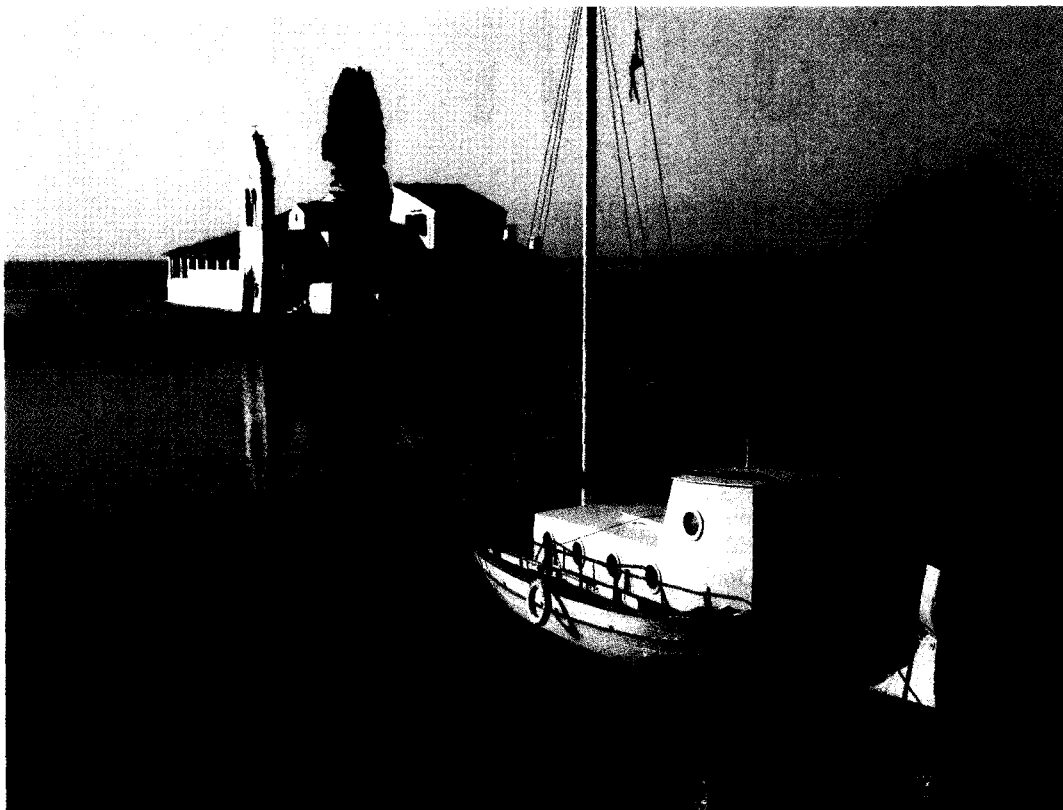
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SPAIN



"DON'T WORRY IF IT SEEMS LIKE TOO MUCH"

Camilo José Cela tells a tale of a day in Madrid

Camilo José Cela received the 1989 Nobel Prize for Literature. Following the death of Francisco Franco, he served as a senator in Spain and helped write a new Spanish Constitution. He is also the author of the recently reissued travel book *Journey to the Alcarria*.

"Madrid has so many things to see, you really need a month to do it all—the Prado and the Parque del Retiro, the Palacio Real, Plaza Mayor, the old city, the many museums. But if I were to tell a friend what to see in a day, I would say to start with a breakfast of coffee with *churros* or *porras* pastries in your hotel. The morning is the time to make the obligatory trip to the Prado Museum. You could spend a week there, but if you'd like to see other parts of the city, you'll have to restrict your visit to early in the day.

There is so much to see in the Prado. Fra Angelico, Botticelli, Raphael, Tintoretto, Hieronymus Bosch (whom we call 'El Bosco'), Dürer, Breughel. And the Spanish painters! El Greco, Murillo, Zurbarán. But my personal favorites are Velázquez and Goya. You must see Velázquez's *Las Meninas* and *Las Hilanderas*, and Goya's *La Maja Desnuda* and *La Familia de Carlos IV*.

After leaving the museum, take a walk outdoors. A nice place close by for a *paseo*—a promenade—is the Paseo del Prado, a boulevard with lots of trees and outdoor cafés. Or, if you have time, go to the Parque del Retiro, behind the Prado. It is filled with beautiful gardens and has a large lake in the center where you can row a boat or feed the fish.

I suggest you have lunch at one of Madrid's oldest restaurants, Lhardy, which still has its beautiful decor from the nineteenth century. You should have *cocido madrileño*, the house specialty. It's the elaborate boiled beef and chickpea dinner of Madrid. *Cocido ma-*

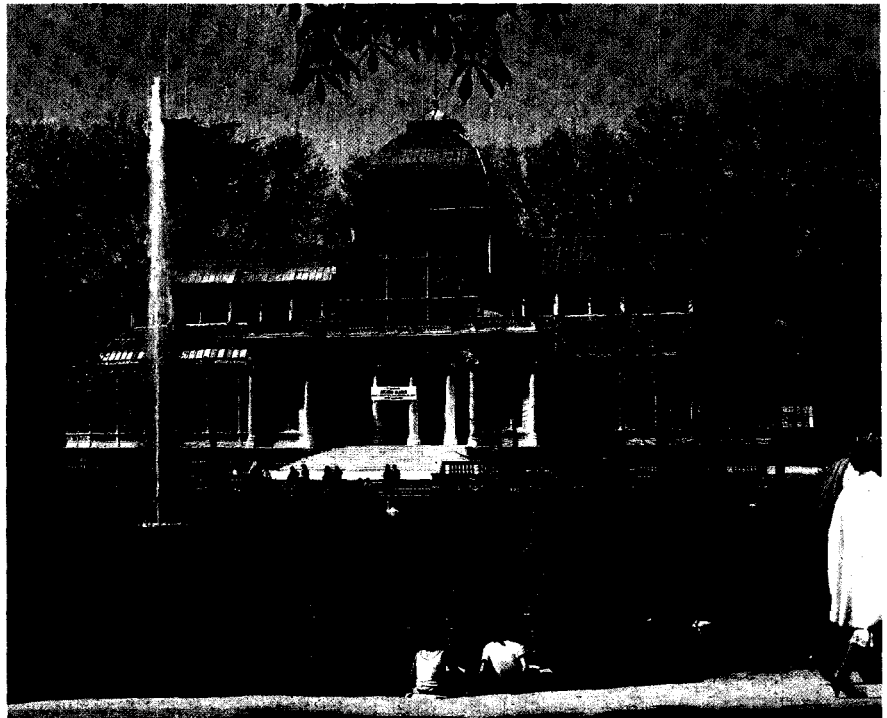
drileño is a three-part meal. The first course is a stew of bacon, sausage, chicken, beef, and ham. Then come garlicky meatballs. Those are followed by a plate of salted cabbage. Don't worry if it seems like too much—we take a long time to eat in Madrid.

Around five o'clock, go to *la corrida*—the bullfight. You could go to Las Ventas—the largest bull ring in Spain—or

By the time the bullfight and all its excitement are over, you'll need to try another Spanish custom—the *siesta*. Go back to your hotel and have a nice nap.

You'll probably still be full from your *cocido madrileño*, but if you're hungry when you wake up, join the *madrileños* for some *tapas*, snacks served in little dishes at the bars. We have the greatest variety of them in the capital. They're from all around the country—everything from mushrooms with garlic to sausages and seafood.

Then it's time to go to the theater, which begins at about eight o'clock. The two most important theaters in Madrid are Teatro Español and Teatro



The Palacio de Cristal, in the Parque del Retiro

one of the smaller ones. I love the bullfight. I have fought in three or four bullfights myself, and as a spectator I still thrill at the great ritual between man and beast. But you should understand what you are seeing. The best way is to do some research about *la corrida* before you go, and to bring a friend who can explain its various aspects.

Real. Both are very old, so they are interesting for the architecture and the interiors. Try to see a production of a play by our great Golden Age playwright Lope de Vega. Whether or not you understand the language, you'll appreciate the visual pageantry. If you're still hungry, there are a number of restaurants you could go to—Zala-

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The traveler has his own philosophy of walking; he believes that everything that comes along is always the best thing that could happen. It is best to go on foot, walking down the middle of the street, listening to the sound his nailed boots make as it rebounds off the houses. The windows of the houses are closed and the blinds are down. Behind the glass—who knows!—the men and women of the city are sleeping off

their good or evil fortunes. There are houses that even look as though they shelter happy people, and whole streets that have a sinister stare, that seem to harbor men without a conscience, tradesmen, moneylenders, pimps, shifty bullies whose souls are spattered with blood. For all anyone knows, the houses of the fortunate people haven't so much as a sprig of mint or marjoram on the balcony. But sometimes the houses of people

smothered by unhappiness, marked with the cruel brand of hate and desperation, are arrogant with balconies full of geraniums or over-blown carnations as big as apples. The face that houses wear is a very mysterious thing; one could think about it for a long time.

—from *Camilo José Cela's Journey to the Alcarria: Travels Through the Spanish Countryside. Atlantic Monthly Press, \$6.95.*

caín, El Amparo, Luculo, and Club 31 are all places I would recommend.

If you want to learn more about the playwright, you can also visit the Casa

de Lope de Vega. It is his house, and he wrote many of his plays there. Besides being historically important, it is also typical of the period, the seventeenth

century. But that's for another day, since naturally the museum will be closed at that hour."

—interviewed by Dwight V. Gast

ITALY

The internationally famous fashion designer Giorgio Armani rarely travels far from his native Milan, where he lives and works.

"If you have only one day in Milan, you have to see La Scala—but a concert or opera there, not just the building. You can't understand La Scala without seeing something performed there, the way you can be impressed by visiting the Paris Opera. It's very intimate. La Scala is the soul of Milan, a city that lives on tradition and culture, and it's hard to understand the city without experiencing the atmosphere there. It helps to go during concert season, of course. In any case, one doesn't discover Milan's soul immediately, but little by little.

If you have a week, it's inevitable to go to the Brera, the city's most important picture gallery. Brera is like La Scala, a Milanese institution, and I live right next to it. The neighborhood around the Brera has become one of the chicest, but what also gives me pleasure is discovering a simpler Milan—the hidden streets around Via Borgonuovo, where my headquarters are, and Via Torino, and Corso Magenta. The *palazzi* are hidden, in small nar-



"A CITY THAT LIVES ON TRADITION AND CULTURE"

Giorgio Armani styles a week in Milan

row streets, not like in Paris or Rome, with their wide streets. Here they're one next to the other, and unremarkable on the outside. The discovery comes when you enter the gates and find the many unexpected courtyards and interior gardens. You don't see them from the streets. But if you try, you can find a less-known Milan, a much more attractive one. I'm from a very Stendhalian Milan.

One aristocratic old *palazzo* in the center of town that recalls that time is the Poldi Pezzoli, the museum in Via Alessandro Manzoni, near Via Monte Napoleone. It has a superb collection of decorative arts, all from one collector in the late-nineteenth century.

The Navigli neighborhood, on the outskirts, has recently been revived, with little restaurants and shops. It's a bit Parisian, even though people call it Milan's Venice because of its canals, and it's become quite fashionable. There's always a flea market Sundays, and a little antiquarian market. You go there to find little objects that the antiques dealers discover and make very expensive.

For the atmosphere of the real Milan go to the restaurant La Braseria Meneghina, a very old restaurant near Via Torino, where good Milanese families have always gone for Sunday lunch with all the uncles and aunts and cousins. The food is typically Milanese, which for my taste is a little heavy, but the atmosphere is wonderful.

I almost never go out to restaurants, because I don't love sitting at a temple, and I feel a little observed, on show. I think of dinner as very private, and whenever I can I invite people to come to me. But if I do go out, I go to Santa



The Palazzo del Governo, in Piacenza

Lucia, a sort of deluxe pizzeria without the *odeur* of one, where you have very simple service and get a plate of spaghetti. It's very easy and simple, nothing exceptional; in fact, it's not known for its culinary arts. But it has a very selective clientele, and if they don't like the looks of you they tell you everything is booked.

For little trips I like to go not north to Varese and Lake Como but south to the Po River valley, where there are gorgeous red-brick houses on the flat green plain, and the atmosphere is very

Milanese. I love the city centers of Piacenza and Pavia. In Northern Italy I adore Lombardy. I'm half Emilian and half Lombard. Emilia I find very beautiful but very sad, full of languor. It's a bit foggy. I prefer the warmth of the Po, where when it's foggy it's fog you can cut with a knife. I like things either hot or cold, or black or white. Some days in Milan, for instance, you can think you're in the mountains, others you think you're at the beach. I prefer extremes."

—interviewed by Corby Kummer

FRANCE

**"YOU CAN ALWAYS
DO SOMETHING NEW"**

**A week of *la dolce vita* in France with
Anouk Aimée**

The acclaimed French actress Anouk Aimée is probably best known in this country for her roles in Claude Lelouch's *A Man and a Woman* and in Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*.



"You should go straight to the south of France. And save Paris for the end—it's a wonderful city. Let's say it's the Cannes Film Festival,

the beginning of May. If you love film, you'll be happy. Stay outside Cannes, at the Hôtel du Cap—Eden Roc, in Cap d'Antibes, or at La Colombe d'Or, in St. Paul de Vence.

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At the Hôtel du Cap, you should have a bungalow near the sea. Rest a little bit; have a day on the beach. Then go to Vallauris to see all the Picassos, and to *la chapelle* that Jean Cocteau painted in Eze.

St. Paul de Vence is very beautiful. If you don't stay at La Colombe d'Or, you must have dinner there because it is magical in the evening. You have the music of the animals, the crickets. Dinner depends on how you feel and which film you've seen. I would order sea bass with olive oil and herbs. Personally, I drink only—I mean, if anybody wants to do a present to me—red Bordeaux! Anywhere, anytime, with anything. Maison Lafite-Rothschild is not bad.

Then you go to Paris.

Take *le train bleu* at night; the cabins are very nice. You can sleep there.

Paris is a city where you can always do something new; for anyone who loves city it's rather fantastic. You have so much choice: restaurants, cinemas, theaters, and museums. A week is very short, you know. You have to choose; and when you choose you lose something. My loss is the Tour Eiffel.

Go to that wonderful Place Vendôme and stay at the Ritz. Or you have L'Abbaye St. Germain, a small charming hotel on the Left Bank.



Dining at La Colombe d'Or, in St. Paul de Vence

Go walking. Go to the Musée du Quai d'Orsay, the Musée Picasso, and to the Musée Rodin, which I love. Walk around the Louvre. There is a small, gay cemetery, like in the countryside, in Montmartre, with trees and a lot of cats asleep.

Have dinner at L'Orangerie, on Ile St. Louis. Cross the Seine by the Louvre to see the Pyramide—you must not miss it. To mix modern with old is most beautiful, no? It's better to see it at night.

The next day, after seeing inside the Pyramide, go see the new, very high arch at La Défense. You have Beaubourg, too, with a lot of shops. But for antiques it's better on the Left Bank, on the Rue de Varenne. On the weekend you can pass the afternoon at the flea

market at Porte de Clignancourt, which is all antiques.

In the evening go to Le Duc, one of the most fantastic restaurants for fish in the world. Or go to a very nice one called Le Cercle, on the top of Lucas-Carton, at Place de la Madeleine. I recommend a French singer I like very much, Barbara, and the new opera if there's a beautiful Verdi or Mozart. Barbara and opera.

On the night before you leave, if the weather would be very, very nice and hot as it can be, go on a *bateau mouche* on the Seine. You can have dinner as you cross Paris on the water and see Notre Dame—everything.

A very beautiful moment in Paris is when the sun goes down. When you cross the Pont Alexandre coming from Les Invalides, you see the roof shining and that sun beating down. I must say, there is a rather magical light. You really think, My God, that's a beautiful city.

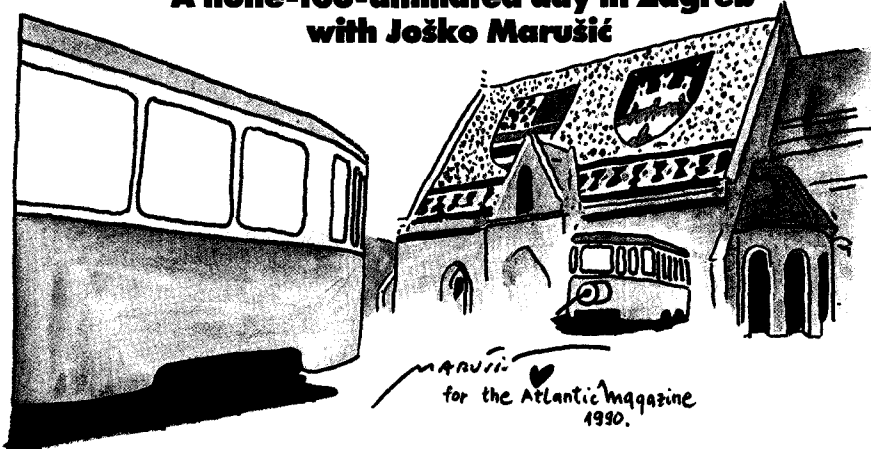
If you have time, go to the Hôtel Normandy, in Deauville, and play in the casino. I like to go there off-season and stay in the same apartment where we shot the film *A Man and a Woman*. It has a view of the sea. And I would have a very good bottle of red wine waiting for me. Yes, if you want, you could ask for the room of Anouk Aimée."

—interviewed by Karen Wesolowski

YUGOSLAVIA

"A FEELING OF LEISURELY TEMPORARINESS"

A none-too-animated day in Zagreb with Joško Marušić



Joško Marušić is an animator and the art director of Zagreb Film's famous Studio of Animated Film—known for, among other things, the biennial World Festival of Animated Films to which it plays host. Marušić also illustrates books, writes screenplays, teaches animation, and draws a popular weekly political cartoon. A native of Split, he has lived in Zagreb since 1970.

"Zagreb is a typical central-European city, with wide avenues, beautiful parks, and classicist architecture. But the traveler who sees only these misses the pace and style of Zagreb. We are truly a city of relaxed people. Probably

under the influence of the winds from the East, we live in the illusion of being able to pause for a moment and to spend a part of each day in leisure, away from the nervous tempo of the rat race.

Take an early-morning stroll through one of the most beautiful and picturesque markets you have ever seen, near the central Cathedral of St. Stephen. You can buy anything and everything here, including the freshest food possible, brought by women who, at the crack of dawn, get up in their small villages around Zagreb. Saturday mornings are especially lively.

From the market, walk uphill to the ancient town. Enjoy the quiet streets and squares, the beautiful buildings, full of history, and the lovely views.

Take a ride in a sky-blue tram that roams lazily through the city. Get off at any station and wander through the bustling streets, and you won't ever know we have 'working hours' here!

Or rent a car and explore the countryside, where even neighboring villages are completely different from each other. It's good to go to historic Gornja Stubica, in the Zagorje region, just north of the city, eat a homemade lunch, and return afterward by way of

The next World Festival of Animated Films will be held June 4-8 in central Zagreb, near the Flower Market. It will feature screenings of current animated films, competing for awards; a retrospective of German animated films from the 1920s to the present; a retrospective of Italian animated commercials; a retrospective of work by the British animator John Halas, who will receive a Life Achievement Award at the festival; homages to three other renowned animators; "Best of" screenings of films from festivals around the world; a program of films by Amnesty International on the subject of human rights; illustrated lectures by experts in computer animation; the "Animarket '90" trade show; and an animators' picnic. For more information: 9th World Festival of Animated Films—Zagreb '90, Nova ves 16, 41000 Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

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Sljeme, Zagreb's mountain. Upon entering Zagreb, stop at Lagvic restaurant for a homemade *strukle* pastry.

Zagreb's old and authentic culture nurtures the cult of cafés, as people exist from one cup of coffee to the next. Day and night, crowds of people stand about drinking and talking, talking, talking. In an atmosphere of ruthless and witty self-irony, this is where the

best jokes ever are invented and told. My favorite café is the Kod Stare Ure ('By the Old Clock'), in the old city, but there are also whole streets of cafés in the city center, where the visitor can enjoy a coffee or a strong drink and perhaps strike up a conversation. In several quiet, old-fashioned Viennese-style coffeehouses, patrons sit for hours over a coffee and a newspaper.

It's nice to live in Zagreb. Here one has a feeling of leisurely temporariness like the one from childhood, carried by the moment between mama's bedtime kiss and turning off the lights. We in Zagreb know that this big race of life has no end and that no applause awaits us. Everyone must carry his own lightning bug through the night."

—interviewed by Jan Nicholson

BRITAIN

Throughout 1990, Glasgow, Scotland, will reign as the Cultural Capital of Europe, a title conferred by the European Parliament. In response, the city will present an ambitious year-long schedule of concerts, museum exhibitions, cultural festivals, and performances by visiting artists—all under the leadership of Robert Palmer, a curator and theatrical producer, who is the director of the 1990 Festivals Office.

"A week in Scotland, this year at least, should begin in Glasgow, where the 'Cultural Capital' celebrations will be pretty much nonstop. But no matter how many distracting events are clamoring for your attention when you arrive, make a point to visit the Burrell



"CATCH YOUR BREATH ON YOUR WAY HOME"

Robert Palmer turns a week in Scotland into a celebration

Collection, an impressive museum of art that was bequeathed to Glasgow by

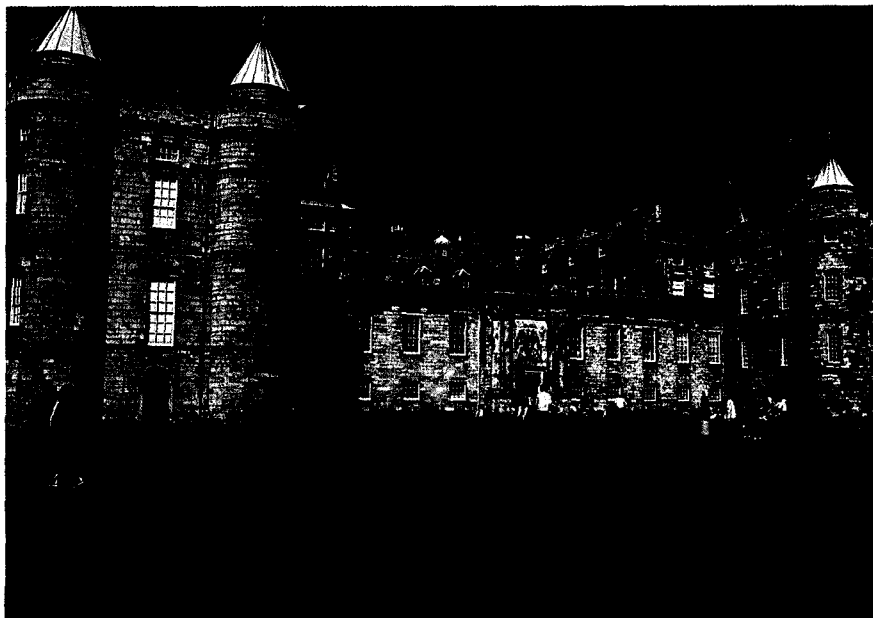
Sir William Burrell, a millionaire shipowner and passionate art collector. The building itself, which was opened in 1983, is as impressive as some of the works it contains. Afterward, stroll through Pollok Park, which surrounds the museum.

If you're looking for a comfortable base in Glasgow, I recommend the White House Hotel, which is actually a series of stone houses joined together into a beautifully arched Georgian crescent.

After a day or two in Glasgow, it's time to hire a car and set out for Edinburgh, just a few hours away. You won't be able to resist visiting the Edinburgh Castle, once you see it looming over the city. But don't forget to allot enough time to walk down the Royal Mile, which runs downhill from the castle to the Palace of Holyrood House, the official residence of the Queen in Scotland. This is the oldest part of the city, and the densest, historically and architecturally.

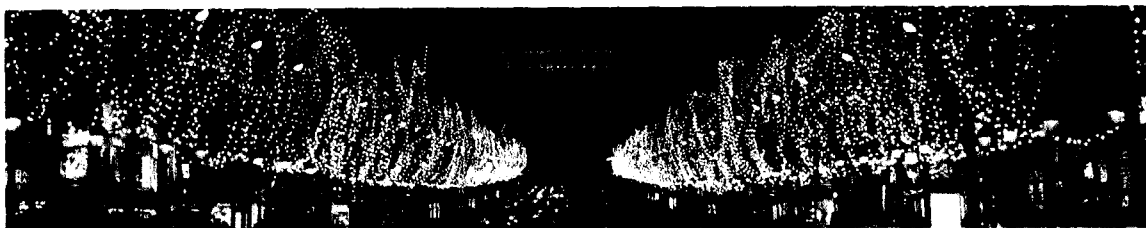
The next morning, head north over the Fourth Road Bridge, which you may recognize from Hitchcock's *39 Steps*. Your destination is Perth, Scotland's ancient capital, but I want to suggest a few detours along the way. First, Kinross, where Mary, Queen of Scots, was imprisoned in a fourteenth-century castle called Loch Leven. Then on to Crail, a small fishing village and seaside resort.

I'd have a lunch of fresh lobster by the harbor. From Crail go west to St. Andrews, where depending on your religious inclinations you can visit either St. Andrew's Cathedral or the world-famous Royal and Ancient Golf Club. You don't have to belong to the club to play, but advance reservations are rec-



The Palace of Holyrood House, in Edinburgh

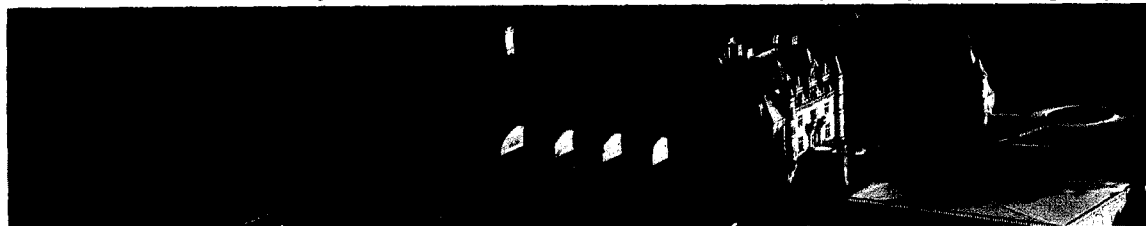
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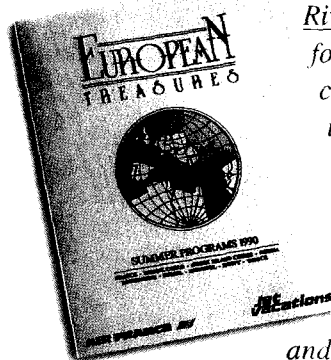


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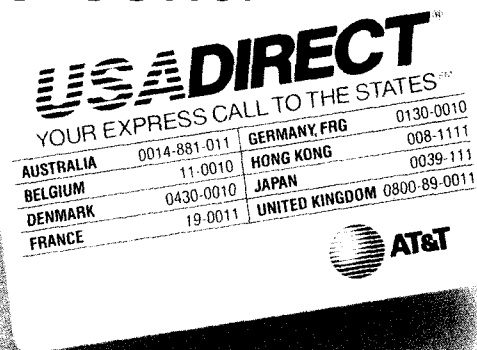
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ommended. Then on to Perth, where, if you haven't slept since Edinburgh, you should head directly for the Balcraig House Hotel, in Perthshire.

The next morning you'll find yourself within easy striking distance of Scone Palace, where kings and queens of Scotland are crowned. Then it's north to Pitlochry, near the geographic center of Scotland. If you care to spend the night, and there are plenty of hotels here, try to arrange to see a performance at the Festival Theatre, or just walk over to the power station and watch the salmon jump up the River Tummel.

Your next trip is through the Pass of Killiecrankie, a wooded gorge, to Blair Castle, an interesting and historically significant baronial mansion. And Aviemore, in the mountains, is a great place to stop, particularly Aviemore Centre, which is something of a sports and recreational hub, with plenty of hiking, skiing, curling, and tennis. Charming hotels and inns abound.

You're now in the middle of the Grampian Highlands, one of Scotland's major whisky-distilling areas. So before you move on, I recommend a visit to Tamnavulin, a local distillery with a visitors' center and a beautiful picnic area, and the Glenlivet, which also offers tours and an exhibition.

At this point Loch Ness looms as the inevitable next attraction. The best site, in my opinion, is Tor Point, where monster sightings increase dramatically on foggy days. Yet even if you see nothing, the scenery is stupendous. From Loch Ness, head north through Strathpeffer, a charming Victorian vil-

lage and spa town, and west to Ullapool, a small fishing town with a wonderful hotel, Ceilidh Place, that features good food and traditional entertainment. If you want to venture farther out to sea, head north to Achiltibuie, on the southern shore of Inverpolly Nature Reserve, and stay at the Summer Isles Hotel, a small, old-fashioned hotel with a beautiful view.

Wherever you stay, you're running out of time, so wake up early and start making your way down the west coast. When you get to Kyle of Lochalsh, the most beautiful village on the west coast, take a ferry to the Isle of Skye, an island with innumerable dramatic vistas. On Skye, Dunvegan Castle is worth visiting, as are the Cuillin Hills—so wild and jagged that they look like something in a theme park.

Now we're late. Time for just two more stops. The first is Fort William Glen Coe, at the foot of Britain's highest mountain, Ben Nevis. The mountain is not particularly impressive, but it is easily climbed and offers wonderful views. And finally, Paisley, the home of the paisley pattern. The Paisley Museum and Art Gallery contains a remarkable collection of original Paisley shawls and a history of the development of the pattern, but unfortunately, your week is up, and you don't have time to visit it. You do? You have another day? In that case, when you get back to Glasgow, try to arrange for a final dinner at One Devonshire Gardens or the Triangle Restaurant. You'll have plenty of time to catch your breath on your way home."

—interviewed by D. C. Denison

Glasgow, Scotland's largest city, will be staging nearly 2,000 special events this year, and millions of visitors are expected to attend them. Here are some highlights of what's planned for the coming months. May 4-27, Glasgow Mayfest, a spring arts festival. May 13-19, Country Music Festival. Also in May, the openings of a Picasso exhibit at the Burrell Collection and "Images of Steam" at the Museum of Transport.

June 2 and 3, "The Big Day" rock and street festival. July 2-6, International Folk Festival. July 13, the 990th Glasgow Fair, at Glasgow Green. July 31-August 5, the Bolshoi Opera makes its British debut, performing Boris Godunov and Prince Igor. August 4-11, Glasgow International Early Music Festival. August 11-20, "StreetBiz," a buskers' festival.

September 1-30, Glasgow Women's Festival. August 31-September 2, Glasgow's World Music Festival. October 8, the opening of the city's new 2,500-seat International Concert Hall; the Scottish National Orchestra will perform. The Berlin Philharmonic, the Bolshoi Orchestra, and the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig will give concerts there later in October.

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AUSTRIA



"LITTLE TIDBITS" **Harald Leupold-Löwenthal's** **analysis of a day in Vienna**

Dr. Harald Leupold-Löwenthal, a lifelong resident of Vienna, is the president of the Sigmund Freud Society and the director of the Sigmund Freud Museum.

"You can't see much of a city in twenty-four hours. It would only be like something you serve as an hors d'oeuvre, you see, little tidbits.

In Vienna, to my mind, the best thing would be to do it on foot, because the city of Vienna, the inner city, the First District, is small enough that you can, at your leisure, have a very nice walk and see a lot. I would start at Stephansplatz, St. Stephen's Cathedral, and walk down Graben and Kohlmarkt to the Imperial Palace, the Hofburg, and then to the left, to Josefsplatz, where you have a very nice gallery, the Stallburg gallery, with interesting pictures of late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century, mainly Austrian, painters. And it would be nice to visit the Great Hall of the National Library, which has one of the hugest collections of Baroque books. From there, you could walk through the Hofburg and down the Ring and see the Town Hall and the Burgtheater, and then you could visit one of Vienna's coffee-houses, Café Landtmann. So far this is a walk of about an hour. If you are very interested in painting, you could just look into the Museum of Fine Arts and have a look at the Breughel paintings, because it's a unique collection. It would take too much time to look at the others.

On our walk down Kohlmarkt to the Hofburg there's the Loos house, by Adolf Loos, but for architecture you must take a taxi. There is a magnificent building by Otto Wagner, the Postsparkasse, and the Church of the Psychiatric Hospital of the City of Vienna, on the Steinhof. If you've got some time you could drive up to Nussdorfer to look at the wonderful water gate—not the American one, but the gate for the water of the Danube, which Wagner also did.

If you want other cafés, near the Landtmann, on Rooseveltplatz, there's

a very modern café called the Café Stein, by a group of young Austrian architects. The Café Sperl, on Gumpendorfer Strasse, is nice because it's very old-fashioned. You can walk from there to the Linke Wienzeile to look at the Otto Wagner houses, which are beautifully restored, near Naschmarkt, which is a fascinating market for fruits and vegetables and so on. On Saturday you

have the antique market there, which is also interesting. And on your way back, you can have a look at the Secession building, and the Karlskirche, which is beautiful. So on this walk, if you want to, you can see quite a lot of things.

I didn't give you any *Heurigen*, or wine gardens, and let's not forget the Sigmund Freud Museum, on Berggasse, where you can spend as much time as you wish. It's a small museum but very interesting.

Oh yes, one more thing is very important. You should take the time to make a walk in the Prater; it's a beautiful park. It has huge chestnut trees. You could have lunch at the Lusthaus, for instance."

—interviewed by Don Rubin

USSR



"YOU CAN LEARN **A LOT BY LOOKING** **AT PEOPLE"**

Sasha Frish juggles
the schedule
for a day in Moscow

Alexander "Sasha" Frish, a ringmaster with the Moscow Circus, was born in Chelyabinsk, in Siberia, and now resides in Moscow.

"For myself, I would wake up at five in the morning and I would go to the Grand Theater, the Bolshoi Theater, where the wonderful Bolshoi Ballet performs. At 5:30 A.M. in the early spring my favorite ballerina gets there; her name is Maya Plisetskaya, and she

Folk-art connoisseurs know Zagorsk for the handmade toys that originate there—especially the *matreshkas*, or nesting dolls. Members of the Russian Orthodox Church, and also architecture and history buffs, know the town as the site of the Trinity Monastery of St. Sergius, an architectural complex that has been a center of church activity since medieval times. Founded circa 1340, the monastery complex was, over the centuries, alternately besieged and bombarded by invaders, and expanded and elaborated. Now it contains the white stone Trinity Cathedral; a five-dome Uspensky Cathedral, built by decree of Ivan the Terrible along the lines of the Kremlin cathedral of the same name; seven additional churches and chapels; and various other buildings—including the only museum of toys in the Soviet Union. The monastery is an active one, and religious services are regularly held.

Zagorsk, some forty miles northeast of Moscow, is accessible by road (the Yaroslavl Highway) and rail (the Trans-Siberian Railway).

comes to teach a class. I would watch the ballerinas enter the theater. They are very beautiful to see.

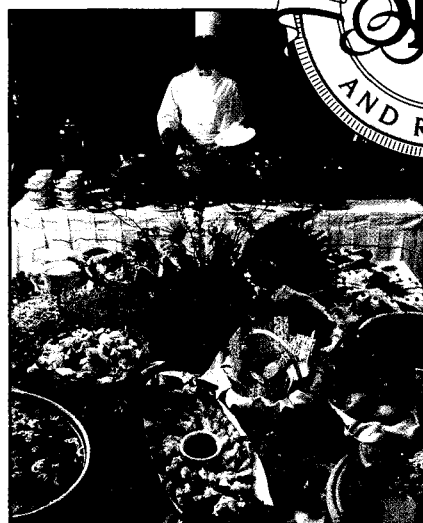
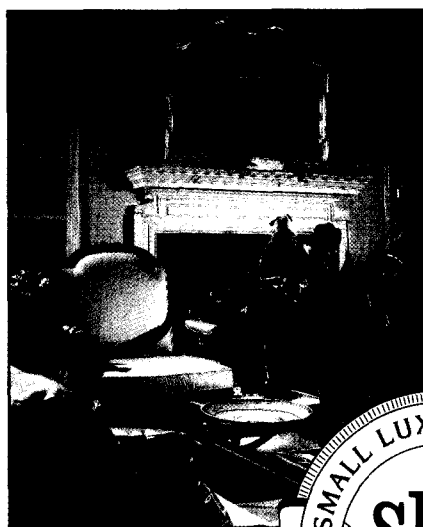
Afterward, I would walk along the little streets to the old circus building on Tsvetnoy Boulevard, or what we call the 'Boulevard of the Clowns.' If I had only a second in Moscow, I would definitely visit the Boulevard of the Clowns. This is the home of the Moscow Circus. Of course, if the circus is performing, you should go see. The circus is a special magic.

But in the morning, I would stand there on the street outside the circus building and watch all the people coming toward me, because people are funny when they don't know you are watching them. I always look at people and compare them and how different they are. You can learn a lot by looking at people.

After, I would go to the Kursk railway station. People leave from there to go to the sea. Buy yourself a *kvas* and a little *pirozhek*. There is a bridge under

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which the train runs, so you can see the train departing. And nearby, in the early spring, you can walk by a big apple tree in bloom, which I think is very beautiful, like the ballerinas, especially in the early daylight.

I would sit under the apple tree and watch the trains. I love the trains. I do not like to fly. I take trains all around the Soviet Union. With planes, if it rains they stop flying, but not trains.

I like Moscow. I live there. But one of my favorite places is Zagorsk. Zagorsk has a very old monastery and

churches, and a special church school and other interesting buildings. I think it is the best small city in the Soviet Union. Zagorsk is maybe a two-hour drive from Moscow. It is really something to see.

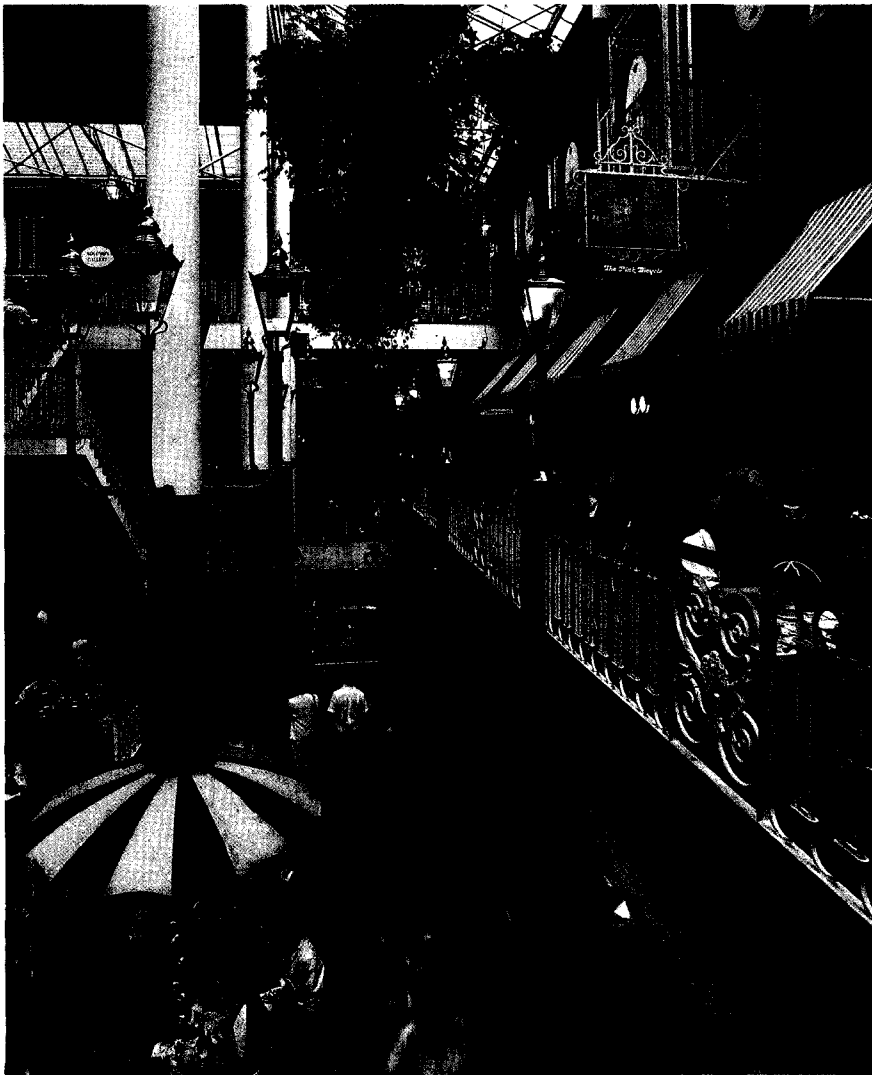
It is wonderful anytime, but it is especially beautiful at holiday time—Merry Christmas time. With the old buildings, it is just spectacular. Everybody comes to see. It is one of the cities featured in the film *Peter the Great*, with Maximilian Schell. It's a wonderful film; you know it? And other films

were made there too.

If I had a week, I would buy a ticket and travel all over the Soviet Union by train. After seven days you would know everything—past, present, and future. The people in Siberia, where I am from, have an open heart, and when they find out you come from America, they will make the happiest face you will ever see in your life. And when you have come to the last point in the Soviet Union, Nakhodka, you can buy a ticket and go straight to Tokyo."

—interviewed by Fran Golden

I R E L A N D



Dublin's shopping arcade on Grafton Street

"YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A LONG DAY"

Noel Pearson walks visitors to Dublin through their part

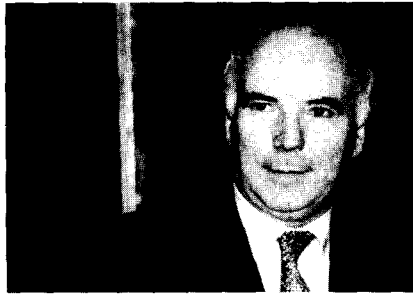
Noel Pearson, a native of Dublin, is the director of the Abbey Theatre. He is also the producer of Jim Sheridan's film *My Left Foot* and Sheridan's forthcoming *The Field*.

"Well, even if you're not staying there (and you should), have an Irish breakfast in the Shelbourne Hotel, on St. Stephen's Green, our city park in the center of the Georgian District. You're going to have a long day, so order the whole shebang—bacon, eggs, sausage, soda bread, Irish breakfast tea. Then, since the best time to go shopping in Dublin is early in the morning—it's less crowded and bothersome then—pick up your presents before lunch. Grafton Street and Powerscourt Townhouse Centre are the places to look for your antiques and woolsens and Waterford. If you're a browser, Hodges Figgis, on Dawson Street, and Waterstone, across the street from it, are my favorite

bookstores. I could spend the entire morning in either one of them just thumbing through the plays.

Then you go and have lunch at a place called Dobbin's Wine Bistro. It's an old-fashioned place, with tile floors covered with sawdust. The wine is great and the grub is fantastic. It's got kind of an international menu—a mixture of French, English, and Irish—but the fish is always terrific.

Stagger out of there at about three o'clock, when you'll really be feeling good. Then spend an hour at the National Gallery, about a ten-minute walk from the restaurant through the Georgian District. The gallery has got a beautiful collection of everything from Rembrandt to Monet to the Irish painters. It's small by international standards, but it's a wonderful, manageable place. In the same group of buildings are some other cultural landmarks, if you have the time. The National Museum has a huge collection of Irish antiquities from several millennia before Christ to the present. My favorite place there is the Treasury Gallery, which has



such relics as the Tara Brooch and St. Patrick's Bell on display.

In the late afternoon you want to go and have Irish afternoon coffee or tea at Bewley's, a very famous Irish restaurant on Grafton Street, and some sticky buns. You'll find all sorts of Dubliners there—little old ladies, young students from Trinity College, tired shoppers from Grafton Street. Then go back to your hotel and have a nap to get ready for the night out.

At about six o'clock, go to the Horse-shoe Bar, at the Shelbourne, and have a drink. Then, of course, you have to go to the Abbey Theatre. The old Abbey, which Yeats and Lady Gregory started,

was burned to the ground, but out of the ashes rose the new Abbey, designed by Michael Scott, which opened in 1966. This year the theater has been given a brand-new facade, and it's especially pleasant to visit because Abbey Street, where it's located, has just become a pedestrian zone. Naturally, I'm prejudiced, but I'm most enthusiastic about what goes on inside the theater as well.

You get out of the Abbey at about half past ten. That's just enough time for another Irish institution, and that is to go and have a pint somewhere. Since the pubs close at 11:30, you'll have to take a cab to O'Donoghue's, on Merrion Row near Baggot Street. The Dubliners no longer play there, but you'll still be able to hear some great traditional Irish music. Then, if you're up for a light supper, go to O'Casey's restaurant, across the road. It has French cuisine, beautifully presented, very light and very good. And then you can go to bed."

—interviewed by Dwight V. Gast

GERMANY

"LIFE IS SLOWLY RETURNING"

A day deconstructing the Berlin Wall with Rainer Hildebrandt

Rainer Hildebrandt is the founder and director of the Haus am Checkpoint Charlie, the Berlin Wall Museum.

"The Berlin Wall has been the symbol of this city and the Cold War for almost thirty years. But it won't be here much longer. If the German Democratic Republic hadn't started to demolish the Wall, the people would have taken it away in pieces.

The best place to see the Wall is near the Brandenburg Gate, in West Berlin. Before the war, the area around the Brandenburger Tor was the heart of Berlin. Nearby were the Reichstag, or parliament house, the busy Potsdamer Platz, and Unter den Linden, the street of palaces, museums, and embassies.

After the war, this section of Berlin



started to be rebuilt. In East Berlin, you see some of the historic buildings on Unter den Linden. The Federal Republic restored the Reichstag, which was burned in 1933 and further damaged in 1945.

When the Wall was built, in 1961, it created a scar across Berlin, particularly here. The city pulled back from the ragged barrier. If a block was not rebuilt

in the West by then, it usually stayed empty. Important streets were blocked by the Wall. So the life of the city went to other places.

Since the events of November 9 last year, the area around the Brandenburger Tor has started to change. Before, this section was mostly quiet, except for tourists who wanted to see the Brandenburger Tor or visit the German history museum in the Reichstag. Now, life is slowly returning. The Wall has an official crossing at the Brandenburg Gate. On weekends, the square in front of the Reichstag is filled with Poles and East Germans selling farm goods, clothes, and old furniture.

Maybe life will return to the Potsdamer Platz, a short walk from the Brandenburger Tor, on the eastern side of the Wall. Before the war, traffic swirled around this square, making it the busiest spot in Europe. People used to meet each other near the standing clock.

Since the Wall cut through the Potsdamer Platz, in 1961, the square has

been a no-man's-land. Ugly and empty. Only police and pigeons. Last year, an official crossing between the two Berlins was created at Potsdamer Platz. When the mayors of West and East Berlin met for the first time, last December, it was there.

Two blocks away from the Potsdamer Platz is Checkpoint Charlie, between West and East Berlin—a favorite sight for Americans, and for Germans a symbol of your commitment to Berlin in the decades after the war.

Next to Checkpoint Charlie is the Haus am Checkpoint Charlie, or Berlin Wall Museum, devoted to the history of the Wall and all the escape efforts. The long tunnels requiring six months to dig. Little cars with secret hiding places where there was once a battery and heating system. Inventions like the largest hot-air balloon built in Europe, and a tiny submarine powered by a bicycle motor, which one escapee used to cross the Baltic to the freedom of Denmark.

Since November 9, our attendance has been growing. Probably it will be more than 500,000 this year. With the



Kennedy, Adenauer, and Brandt at the Brandenburg Gate in 1963

opening of the Wall, one-third of our visitors are now from the GDR and other countries in Eastern Europe. There is no charge for these visitors, who are astonished to learn what really has

happened. Of course, the museum remains popular with the French, Hollanders, and Americans, any people who have struggled for their freedom."

—interviewed by Charles Lockwood

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Knud Hedegaard is the director of Legoland, a twenty-five-acre amusement park in Billund, Denmark. The park is built around such Brobdingnagian Lego constructions as a forty-foot-high sculpture of Sitting Bull, made with just over one-and-a-half-million Lego bricks.

"Many Americans think that Denmark is just Copenhagen, but of course it's much more than that. Still I think we should start there, with a walking tour. Copenhagen is one of the



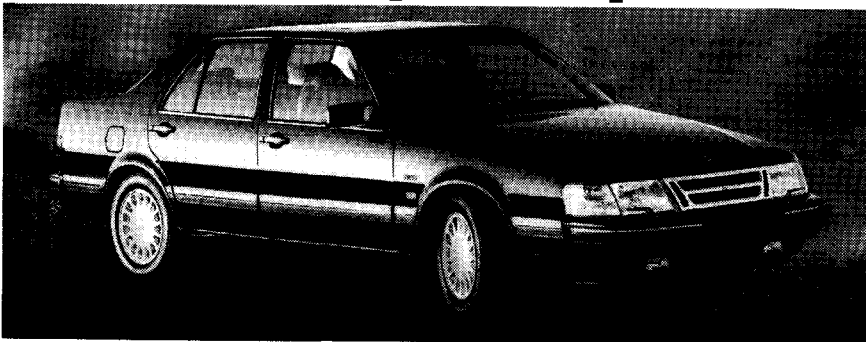
great walking cities. In the summer, the pastry shops and pubs that spill out onto Strøget, 'the strolling street,' will give you a lot to look at. Plan to spend at least a day.

The next morning, drive an hour and a half west to the Korsør-Nyborg ferry, which will take you to Funen, a rather large island best known as the childhood home of Hans Christian Andersen. In Odense, Funen's provincial capital, there is an Andersen museum; you can visit his birthplace also. A number of castles outside the city, like Egeskov, are worth visiting. When you get tired of driving, spend the night at a local kro. These are comfortable, well-preserved inns that can be found in almost every small village in Denmark.

On day three, your trip should continue west, to Jutland and of course Legoland, in the town of Billund, the heart of the Lego religion. It's really a park, akin to America's Disneyland, with rides, amusements, and mammoth Lego displays. My favorite? Perhaps our forty-six-foot-high Lego recreation of Mount Rushmore.

Jutland is a kind of a peninsula, with wonderful beaches. Many Danes vacation here. So after your Legoland visit I would suggest a drive up the east coast of Jutland to Frederikshavn, where you can board a ferry bound for Oslo, Norway. Oslo is a beautiful, busy city, but I envy Norway its wonderful hills, a refreshing change from Denmark. I'll suggest two trips from Oslo to prove my

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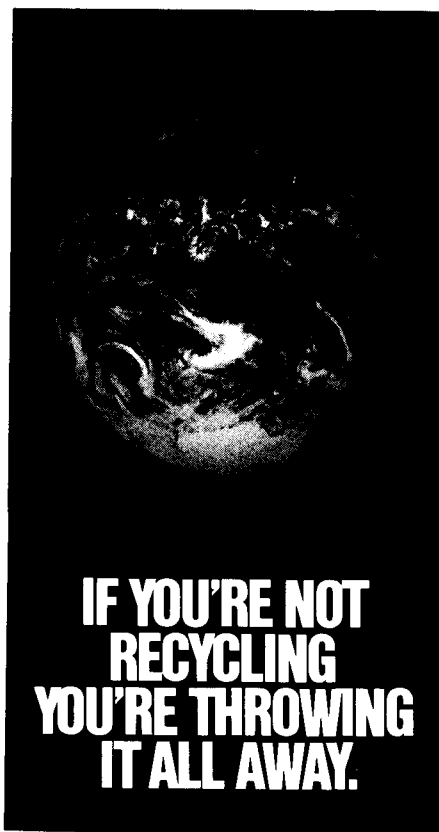


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ITALY - GREECE
TURKEY

point. First Lillehammer, the site of the 1994 Olympics, which has beautiful hills, great for skiing in the winter, hiking in the summer. Another suggestion is a drive through the countryside to Bergen, on the coast, where it is possible to take cruises of various lengths, for a sea-level view of the impressive fjords.

Now where are we—day four? Or five? No matter. From Oslo, follow the coast down to Gothenburg, Sweden. If the weather is pleasant you can stop along the way at one of the many beaches and resorts. When you get to Gothenburg, head inland and follow

the Göta Canal all the way to Stockholm. Stockholm is situated on fourteen islands. Old Town, in the heart of the city, is where I would go first. If you haven't had enough ferry rides (and there is one more to come), there are some small ferries that are very cheap and fun.

After a night in Stockholm, get back in the car and drive southwest to Helsingborg, Sweden. You can stop for lunch in Vadstena, on Lake Vättern, a town full of ancient brick-and-stone buildings and tiny squares. There is also a Renaissance castle, Vadstena, which is open to the public. This is old

Danish land, by the way.

From Helsingborg it's a fifteen-minute ferry ride to Helsingør and Kronborg Castle, where Shakespeare set *Hamlet*. The castle, which is open to the public, is impressive in its own right. From there, it's a pleasant ride of a few hours down the east coast of Denmark back to Copenhagen, where, if my calculations are incorrect and you arrive a day early, you'll have plenty to do until your departure. Come to think of it, even if you arrive in Copenhagen a few *minutes* early, you'll have plenty to do.

—interviewed by D. C. Denison

G R E E C E

"EVERYONE SINGS AND DANCES"

Mikis Theodorakis orchestrates a week in Greece

Mikis Theodorakis is a composer and musician, and a political activist as well. He is perhaps best known abroad for having written the theme to Zorba the Greek. Theodorakis has served off and on as a deputy in Greek parliament for twenty-five years and was elected most recently last November, as an independent. Raised in Crete, he now resides in Athens and Paris, spending summers near Corinth.

"First you must see the Acropolis and the Parthenon and all that concerns ancient Athens. Then, I would say, go right away to visit Delphi. From there go to Olympia and then to Epidaurus Theater. I think that in three days you can finish ancient Greece.

Then you must visit all of Crete. It is a marvelous island. Especially see Knossos, the ancient city. It would also be good if you could attend a popular festival on Crete. Spend two days on Crete and see the entire island, because it is very beautiful.

And then there is another place that I love very much, the Arcadia Moun-

tains, at the center of the Peloponnese. You must visit and see the little villages where the contemporary Greeks live.

Next you may want to go to Volos,



On Crete, the ruins of the Minoan Palace of Knossos, said to have been the home of the Minotaur

which is north of Athens. There is a mountain, Pelion, that is 1,600 meters high, so high you can see the entire Aegean Sea. It is magnificent.

There are other regions which should be visited in Greece which are also wonderful. For example, we have a region in the center of Greece called Thessaly, where there are the Meteora. The rocks look like they were created by meteors. The Meteora are very, very big, and at the summit of each there is a monastery.

Then there are the Greek islands. We have some islands that are very touristy and should probably be avoided, such as Mykonos, Santorini, Corfu, Hydra. But there are other islands that don't have many people. The Ionian islands, on the west coast of Greece, for example. Then there are islands in the Aege-

an, in the center of Greece, and the Dodecanese, on the east coast.

There are islands everywhere, even very close to Athens. At the port of Piraeus, near Athens, you can take a little boat and soon you arrive at Salamis, Aegina, Hydra, Poros. These four islands are an hour or two by boat from Athens and Piraeus, so you can do an excursion in one day.

For entertainment, in Athens there are about a million taverns. Everywhere in Greece there are taverns, but in Athens especially. In the evenings, all the Athenians go out to eat in taverns. They eat a lot. There are taverns that specialize in fish or meat, and there are taverns for popular music.

You must not go to an elitist tavern, however; you must go to a popular tavern. So you need to know a Greek

friend who will take you to a quarter where there are little taverns with delicious meals. Or you can ask a taxi driver for a suggestion.

In Piraeus, there are taverns along the seashore. You should go to Mikrolimano, for instance. You can eat along the border of the port, where there is wonderful fresh fish.

For me, the best season in Greece is spring, especially during Easter. If you go to a village, everyone is celebrating. You can eat in anyone's home. It's free. In all the homes they have shish-kebab onions. They put the entire onion in the fire. There is a lot of wine and everyone sings and dances, in all the homes and in all the villages.

Yes, they sing my songs too."

—interviewed by Fran Golden and Karen Wesolowski

CRUISE-SHIP CAPTAINS NAME THEIR FAVORITE PORTS

Flekkefjord

Captain Leif Larson, of Renaissance Cruises, is a native of Hitra, Norway, and has been working on cargo and passenger ships since 1959. Renaissance Cruises, which launched its first ship last fall, now operates a fleet of eight ships worldwide.

"There's a little port on the south coast of Norway, Flekkefjord, that I find idyllic. I like it, I think, simply because it's such a classic southern-Norway town. The houses are old, white, and wood-framed; the streets are narrow; and every Sunday the citizens raise the Norwegian flag up the flagpole. Unfortunately, I can't suggest much to do in Flekkefjord. If you want history and culture and shopping, you could take a day trip to Stavanger, which is not far away to the west, and very busy, or Kristiansand, to the south, which has a very fine fort. By contrast, the pleasures that Flekkefjord offers are simple: a trip to the beach and a respite from the modern world. But that is worth quite a lot today, no?"

Naples

Yury Andreevich Khromykh is the captain of the Russian cruise ship Odessa.



Captain Ola Harsheim, of the Royal Viking Line

Khromykh, who was born in Odessa, has been working on cruise ships and merchant vessels for more than thirty years. Highlights of the Odessa's itinerary this year include the Eastern Mediterranean and Egypt in May; England, Ireland, and Scotland in July; and the Black Sea in September and October.

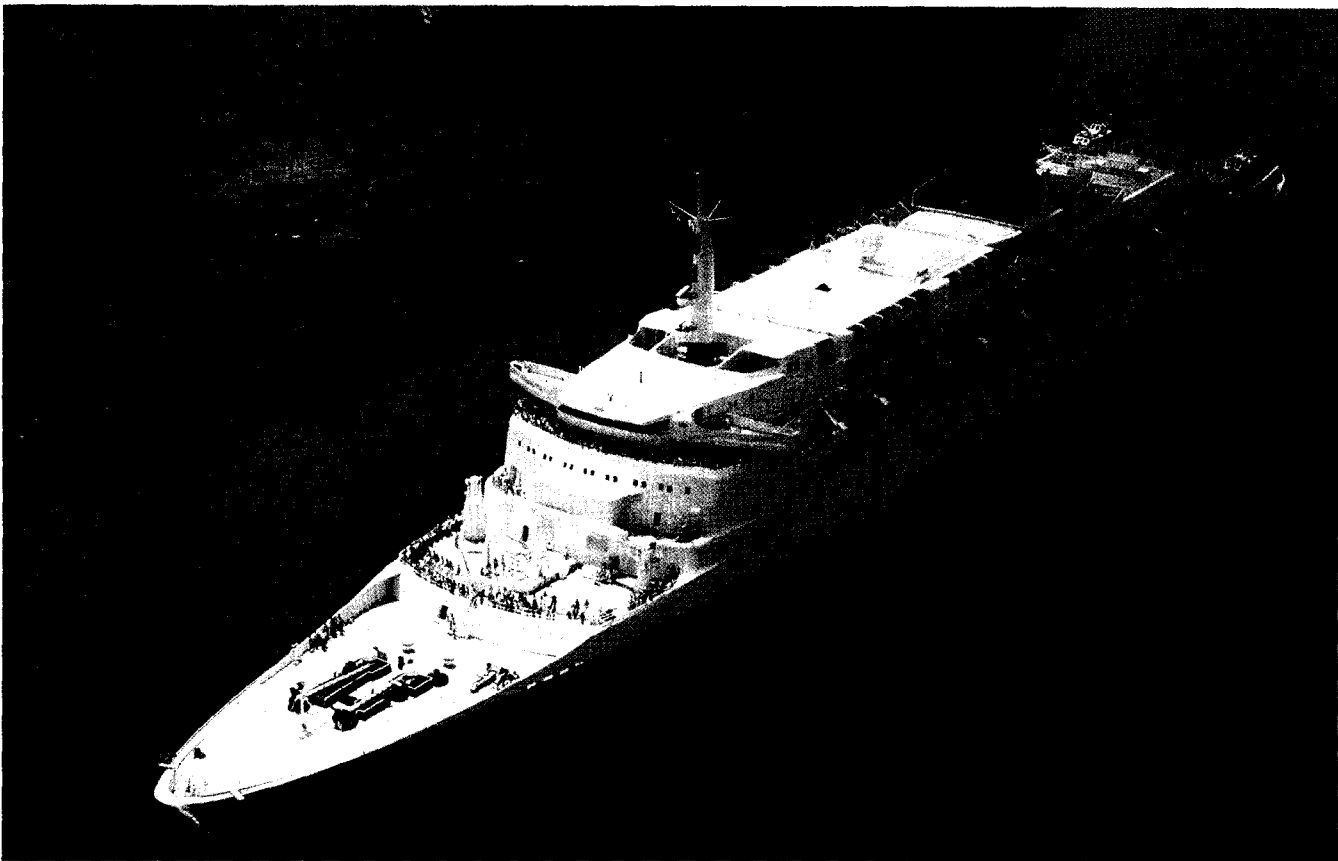
"Naples is a very hospitable port. It's also a beautiful introduction to Italy. The beaches, the palm trees, and the boulevards are all inviting. There is a very nice promenade along the shore, or *lungomare*, that is a wonderful place to watch the sun set. You should eat ice cream if you want to blend in. Mount Vesuvius is not far away from Naples, so if you have the time, it is worth a visit. Also

Pompeii, which will give you a very vivid picture of ancient Roman life. If you remember that Mount Vesuvius is still active, you'll feel better about leaving."

The Kiel Canal

Ola S. Harsheim, captain of the Royal Viking Sun, was born in the inland Norwegian town of Skjåk. He began his career some thirty years ago, at age fifteen, when he set sail as a seaman aboard a sailing ship out of Bergen, Norway. In November of 1988, Harsheim was named captain of the Royal Viking Sun, the Royal Viking Line's newest vessel. This year Captain Harsheim will command the Sun on voyages in Europe, the Mediterranean, and South America.

"I'm especially fond of Northern Europe, and if I could expand the question a bit, I would choose the Kiel Canal, in Germany, as one of my favorite passages in that part of the world. It cuts through a very beautiful farm district of Germany, and passengers are often surprised and charmed to look out and find themselves in the middle of this quaint, very rural world, with humble houses, people on bicycles, and small ferries and pleasure boats. Sometimes we even arrange to have a



Cunard Line's *Queen Elizabeth 2* under way

traditional German brass band on deck, just to set the atmosphere. The canal is very narrow, and spanned by seven bridges that are so low that we have to collapse our masts to fit under them. So the difference in scale is very striking. After days in the open sea, our ten hours in the Kiel Canal are a refreshing change."

Santorini

Captain Chris Ferentinos, of Sun Line Cruises, is a native of the Greek island of Ithaca, and a fifth-generation captain. He began his nautical career at age seventeen and has been with Sun Line Cruises for twenty-three of his thirty-four years at sea. This year the Sun Line's three ships will be frequenting ports on the Greek islands and in Turkey, Egypt, and Israel.

"The Greek island of Santorini is one port that never fails to impress me. The island is located almost in the middle of the Aegean Sea, and it's believed that a massive volcanic explosion, around 1500 B.C., created its peculiar crescent shape: one side goes very smoothly down to the sea, while the harbor side has very steep cliffs that rise almost ver-

tically out of the water. When you enter the port, all the whitewashed houses on the cliffs look like snowcaps. Then, when you arrive, you go zigzagging up the cliffs on the back of a donkey to the island's main town, right on the edge of that cliff. If you want to enjoy the dramatic views, you can stay on this side of the island. If you want to relax on a smooth black lava beach, you have only to head in the other direction."

Amsterdam

Kai Julsen, captain of the *Crystal Harmony*, began his nautical career in 1959. A native of Fredrikstad, Norway, Julsen currently resides in Nagasaki, Japan, where he is overseeing the final fitting-out of the *Crystal Harmony*, to be launched in July. Its inaugural season will include sailings in Alaska and Canada, Mexico, and Europe.

"Always it's a pleasure to visit Amsterdam. Amsterdam is a small port, and very convenient to the city. You actually get a beautiful view from the ship. Because the country is so flat, you can see quite a distance. In fact, because of Amsterdam's extensive system of canals, you can see most of the city with-

out ever setting foot on land. Boat tours of Amsterdam appear to be plentiful. You may want to take a small bike trip outside the city; in a couple of hours you're in farm country. Holland is very accessible."

Kotor

Tormod Hansen, captain of the *Windstar*, began his nautical career in 1960, when at age sixteen he shipped out on a cargo liner from a port near his hometown of Sandøy, Norway. For the past three years he has been commanding the *Windstar*, which will be sailing in the Mediterranean and the Adriatic this summer and fall.

"I hadn't heard a single word about Kotor, in Yugoslavia, before I visited there for the first time, last year. But I was completely charmed. It is located approximately forty-two nautical miles from Dubrovnik, in the republic of Montenegro, and it has a narrow, dramatic entrance; it reminded me of a fjord. We passed a monastery and a nautical school as we entered, and they greeted us warmly; some of them even waved blankets from the windows, a traditional hello. When we went ashore, we discovered

that the town, which is very small, has an almost medieval atmosphere, with many small squares connected by short, narrow streets. The entire town is surrounded by a series of walls that go back to the ninth century. In 1979, an earthquake damaged much of the town, including some very beautiful churches, but they have rebuilt. The waterfront and their major pier are brand-new, in fact, which makes it a pleasure to navigate. I liked Kotor so much that I'm trying to get it on next year's itinerary. But I may be visiting Kotor before then, on my next holiday."

Istanbul

Ian Gibb, captain of the Royal Princess, is a native of Newcastle upon Tyne, England, and a third-generation sea captain. He first sailed out of London, thirty-six years ago, aboard a tanker, but soon switched to cruise liners, where he has remained. This year, the Royal Princess's European cruises will depart from Barcelona, Venice, London, and Naples.

"Istanbul is a city that is wonderful to approach by sea. The first thing that strikes you is the great Blue Mosque, with its minarets. It's particularly beautiful if you arrive at sunrise or sunset. At dawn, you see the silhouette of the mosque against the morning sky; in the evening you see this incredible, yellow, hazy glow as the mosque is illuminated by the last rays of the dying sun. Also, when you dock in Istanbul, next to the Galata Bridge, it's only a few minutes' walk to the most interesting parts of the city. I recommend visiting the Grand Covered Bazaar, the biggest shopping center of all time. Istanbul is not a beautiful place, but it is lively and active. It is also endlessly fascinating to see East and West meeting within Istanbul's borders. Don't try to absorb it all in one visit. I don't think anyone who's ever been to Istanbul wouldn't want to go back and explore more."

Liverpool

Robin Allen Woodall, captain of the Queen Elizabeth 2, joined Cunard as an

apprentice in 1950, shipping out of his home port of Liverpool. He has spent his entire forty-year career with the Cunard Line, now celebrating its 150th anniversary, and he will be at the helm for many of the QE2's celebratory voyages, which include cruises as well as Atlantic crossings.

"Whenever I'm asked my favorite port, I try to avoid trouble by saying, simply, 'home.' Which is Liverpool, actually a great seaport, by the way, and one that gives passengers access to some of the most beautiful parts of England. The Lake District, for example, and North Wales and the Yorkshire Dales are some of the most beautiful dale areas in England, and all within easy reach. Closer to port, I would recommend Liverpool's own Albert Dock area, which has been salvaged and rejuvenated into a wonderful collection of shops, restaurants, and exhibition areas. The Merseyside Maritime Museum is, in my opinion, Albert Dock's most impressive attraction, although of course I'm predisposed to the topic."

—interviewed by D. C. Denison

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Infamous

Lou Reed and John Cale, still the antithesis of good vibes

by Francis Davis

YOU COULDN'T have paid me to see the Rolling Stones on their concert tour last fall, even though I still like their records. It's just *them* I can't stand anymore—the blown-out satyrs. But I wouldn't have missed *Songs for 'Drella—A Fiction*, a collaboration between Lou Reed and John Cale, two of the four original members of the Velvet Underground, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music last fall.

Songs for 'Drella was presented as part of BAM's Next Wave Festival, an annual interdisciplinary performing-

arts series that last year also staged new works by the composer Laurie Anderson and the choreographers Bebe Miller and Christine Brunel, among others. The performance consisted of fifteen new songs written and sung by Reed or Cale. The subject was the late Andy Warhol, the Velvet Underground's early benefactor. ("Drella," compounded from "Dracula" and "Cinderella," was a nickname for Warhol, of which he was not supposed to have been especially fond.)

This wasn't a Velvet Underground

reunion concert, nor could it have been, without the rhythm guitarist Sterling Morrison and the drummer Maureen Tucker. Hardly more than an hour in length, and over before 9:30 P.M., it wasn't even a rock concert. It was more of a small-scale performance piece, with Reed and Cale seated reading music in front of (and sometimes behind) Jerome Sirlin's riveting slide projections, which included Warhol's famous electric chairs, stills from his movies, and tabloid headlines—"POP GOES THE POP ARTIST!"—about Valerie Solanis's attempt on his life, in 1968. There was no stomping or cheering until the end, when some audience members began to yell out titles of old Velvet Underground songs ("I'm Waiting for the Man," which was about a white boy scoring drugs in Harlem, was the consensus choice). Reed and Cale ignored these requests for a familiar encore, at least at the show I attended. Still, the sight of them both on stage, in one of their few appearances together since Cale left the group, in 1968, brought back memories of how lonely it was rooting for the Velvet Underground in the late 1960s.

As an undergraduate, I bought *White Light/White Heat*, the Velvets' second album and the last with Cale, on the day it was released, early in 1968. I took it with me that night to the house of friends, where about six people were already gathered in that era's version of a poker game or coffee klatch—passing around a hash pipe, with Jimi Hendrix blaring on the stereo. When I offered to relieve the monotony by breaking open *White Light/White Heat*, everybody groaned.

It's probably just as well that I didn't get to play the album that night, because of the seventeen-minute track "Sister Ray." If the lyrics about transvestites and their sailor boyfriends mainlining heroin at an orgy hadn't bummed everybody out, what might have been was Cale's overloaded organ crescendos and Reed's guitar feedback, which was quite different from Hendrix's—it was shrill and intentionally grating. More extreme than anything else the Velvet Underground ever recorded, "Sister Ray" nevertheless typifies what made the sixties counterculture uneasy about them: Lou Reed's perverse identification with junkies, speed freaks, drag queens, sadomasochists, and other subspecies

crossbred from the drug culture and the sexual revolution. Reed's songs (the titles "Heroin" and "Venus in Furs" give an idea of their content) graphically detailed the darkness and depravity no one wanted to admit might be on the other side of the walls that were coming down. Because he wrote from the point of view of his characters, avoiding the autobiographical moralizing favored by most of the era's rock bards, some people just didn't know what to make of him. His detachment gave his lyrics something approaching literary complexity, but also left him open to charges of amorality and exploitation.

Though the melodies to ballads like "I'll Be Your Mirror" and "Femme Fatale" were surprisingly lovely, their lyrics described emotional isolation—especially as delivered by Nico, the toneless German-born blonde with whom Warhol teamed the Velvets on their first LP. But Reed's prickly pose as a sick-of-flower-power *fleur de mal* wasn't the Velvet Underground's only shortcoming, as far as most record buyers were concerned. The essayist and longtime Velvet Underground chronicler Ellen Willis once aptly described the band's music as "prophetic of a leaner, meaner time." In an era in which countless rock bands thought they were upgrading rock-and-roll into an art form with raga rhythms, jazz harmonies, and learned classical allusions, the Velvets seemed bent on demonstrating that rock's three chords would suffice, provided that you stretched them to the breaking point. Even on their quieter and more playful songs the band's sound was so spare and unadorned that their musicianship was inevitably called into question.

IN FACT THE group's minimalist approach to rock-and-roll was a matter of choice. The Welsh-born John Cale, whose droning patterns on bass and electric viola contributed as much as Reed's barbed lyrics to making the Velvet Underground's music the antithesis of good vibes, had studied composition at Goldsmiths' College, in London, and—on the recommendation of Aaron Copland—had been awarded a scholarship to study with Iannis Xenakis at Tanglewood. A disciple of the prototypical minimalist composer La Monte Young, Cale had been one of a relay team of pianists (including John

Cage) that played Erik Satie's "Vexations," an eighty-second passage of music played 840 times, without interruption, over eighteen and a half hours in 1963. The band's only completely intuitive musician was Maureen Tucker, whose unflagging drive made up for her lack of conventional technique. (Of course, the very fact that the Velvets would let a woman do their drumming was all the proof some needed that they couldn't be serious.)

For a band like the Velvet Underground to be scorned wasn't as ignoble a fate as not to be taken seriously, which they initially weren't, as a result of Warhol's sponsorship. The popular assumption was that Reed and his bandmates were four more of Warhol's talentless, strung-out "superstars," destined to be infamous for fifteen minutes, like International Velvet or Baby Jane Holzer. Warhol had recruited the Velvets to supply the music for his Exploding Plastic Inevitable shows, in 1966. He served as the band's first manager, with his aide-de-camp Paul Morrissey, producing and designing the cover (a peelable banana) for their first LP. Soon afterward the band dissociated itself from him.

Before finding the Velvet Underground, Warhol had even considered starting a rock band of his own with several fellow visual artists, or so he once told an interviewer. Nothing if not shrewd, he realized that his competition as a pop deity was Bob Dylan and the Beatles, not Claes Oldenburg and Jasper Johns. Did Warhol hope to experience rock stardom vicariously through the Velvets, as he vicariously experienced sin and degradation through his Factory line of Bike Boys and Chelsea Girls? If so, he chose the wrong band, for the Velvets never achieved commercial success (though Reed later did, on his own).

But Warhol had the last laugh, because, as the British critics Simon Frith and Howard Horne nicely put it in their recent book, *Art Into Pop*, the Velvet Underground "became the model for an avant-garde *within* rock and roll, the source of a self-conscious, intellectual, trash aesthetic." So did Warhol, as British glam rockers like David Bowie emulated his modern-day Oscar Wilde act of making himself his most talked-about piece of art. (In 1973 Bowie produced "Walk on the Wild Side," Reed's only hit single.) Warhol also in-

spired Malcolm McLaren, the proprietor of a London boutique called Sex, who ultimately went him one better by creating practically from scratch both a rock band (the Sex Pistols) and a pop look (late-sixties punk). On their own turf the Velvet Underground's immediate successors were the New York Dolls, five heterosexual men in drag who looked as though they had just stepped out of a Lou Reed song, and who first gained notoriety with their performances at New York's Mercer Art Center (significantly, also the first site of the Kitchen, the performance space that nurtured the minimalist composer Philip Glass).

A critic once remarked that "the Velvet Underground didn't sell many records, but everyone who bought one formed their own band." Virtually every New York punk, new-wave, or no-wave band of the late seventies, including Talking Heads, masterminded by the art-school dropout David Byrne, incorporated some aspect of either the band's music or its alienated stance. More recently, popular bands like REM and the Cowboy Junkies have paid homage to the Velvets by covering Reed's more tuneful songs ("Pale Blue Eyes" and "Sweet Jane," respectively); the bohemian art band Sonic Youth has based its sound on the all-out assault of "Sister Ray." A recent photograph of Perfect, described as Poland's most popular rock band, showed the leader wearing a T-shirt with a photograph of the cover of *The Velvet Underground*, the paperback book about sadomasochism from which Reed's band took its name.

According to what I read, the Velvet Underground's influence now dominates alternative college radio. Their latest generation of progeny is said to include such emerging bands as 11th Dream Day, Stone Roses, Thelonus Monster, Field Trip, Das Damen, Died Pretty, Galaxie 500, and the Buck Pets. I admit that I haven't heard any of these bands. Like most people my age, I no longer listen to much new rock.

In my case, though, I like to think that age isn't the only factor. Twenty years ago, regardless of which bands you preferred or what else you listened to, it was possible to believe that rock-and-roll wasn't *just music*. That's why the question of how your favorite rockers compared as musicians with

their jazz or classical counterparts was irrelevant. Rock still isn't just music, but in light of what else it has become, the difference you can't help noticing is that jazz and classical musicians never have to worry about what to do next. They sing, compose, or play their instruments: artistically, they are what they do. Every time a rock star makes a new record, he needs to decide on a unified motif for his videos, his carefully orchestrated press interviews, and his promotional tour. It has become impossible to tell the performer from the sales pitch.

WHAT MADE *Songs for 'Drella* exciting even before Reed and Cale appeared on stage was the anticipation of hearing new songs unaccompanied by stage maneuvers already audience-tested on MTV. (There had been just one previous performance, at St. Ann's Church in Brooklyn, earlier in the year—a dry run of sorts, minus Sirlin's visuals and minus one song. The new item was a "dream" monologue, written by Reed but delivered by Cale, in the style of Warhol's diaries.) These songs, although jauntier and softer-edged, recalled in their spare texture and straightforward imagery the ones that Reed and Cale had performed with the Velvet Underground. The majority of them were first-person songs from Warhol's point of view, tracing his life from his childhood as the "gay and faty . . . pinkeyed, painting albino" son of working-class Czechoslovakian immigrants near Pittsburgh to his death from complications following routine gallbladder surgery in 1987—an event foreshadowed, in this subjective telling of the story, by the wounds inflicted by Solanis nineteen years earlier: "The bullet split my spleen and lung / The doctors said I was gone . . ." (The quotation is from Reed's "Nobody but You.")

Although Cale was generally more successful in capturing Warhol's affectless "wow," Reed filled his songs with rich observations about Warhol's arch naturalism as a filmmaker ("What you get is what you see"), his aversion to physical contact ("I like lots of people around me, but don't kiss hello and please don't touch"), and his anger at being blamed by some for the drug-related deaths of so many of his acolytes ("I'm no father to you all. . . I never

said give up control"). But despite having Warhol admit that "if you're looking for deep meaning, I'm as deep as this high ceiling," Reed seemed to be trying, unsuccessfully for the most part, to persuade you that there was more to Warhol than met the eye. He was sentimentalizing Warhol, ascribing to him gut feelings that Warhol consciously avoided in both his life and his work.

Even so, I think I know what Ellen Willis was talking about in her review of *Songs for 'Drella* in *The Village Voice* when she said the songs moved her to tears. My reaction wasn't quite as emotional, but I felt something. I didn't know exactly what it was until I went back and listened to Reed's 1989 album *New York* (Sire 9 25829-1). In "Halloween Parade" Reed is amused by some of the getups at the annual Greenwich Village dragfest, but saddened by the absence of some familiar faces. He doesn't need to mention AIDS for you to realize that's what the song's about, and you don't need to have lost a friend to the epidemic to be moved. In "Dime Store Mystery" he sees *The Last Temptation of Christ*, muses that "the duality of nature, Godly nature, human nature, splits the soul," wonders what went through Warhol's mind "when you realized the time had come for you," and wishes that he himself "hadn't thrown away my time on so much human and so much less divine." What makes Reed one of the few rock performers of the 1960s still worth listening to is that he's delivering messages the rest of us might wish to ignore—in this case, that nobody lives forever, and nobody's getting any younger.

All four Velvet Underground albums released before the band's breakup in 1970 are now available on compact disc. The two with Cale are *The Velvet Underground & Nico*, with "Heroin" and "Venus in Furs" (Verve 823-290-2), and *White Light/White Heat*, with the only-for-the-dedicated "Sister Ray" (Verve 825-119-2). The others are *The Velvet Underground*, with Reed's "Pale Blue Eyes" (Verve 815-454-2), and *Loaded*, with the original "Sweet Jane" (Warner 9-27613-2). There is also a well-chosen CD compilation: *The Best of the Velvet Underground* (Verve 841-164-2). A studio version of *Songs for 'Drella*—*A Fiction*, made late last year, is imminent from Sire Records. □

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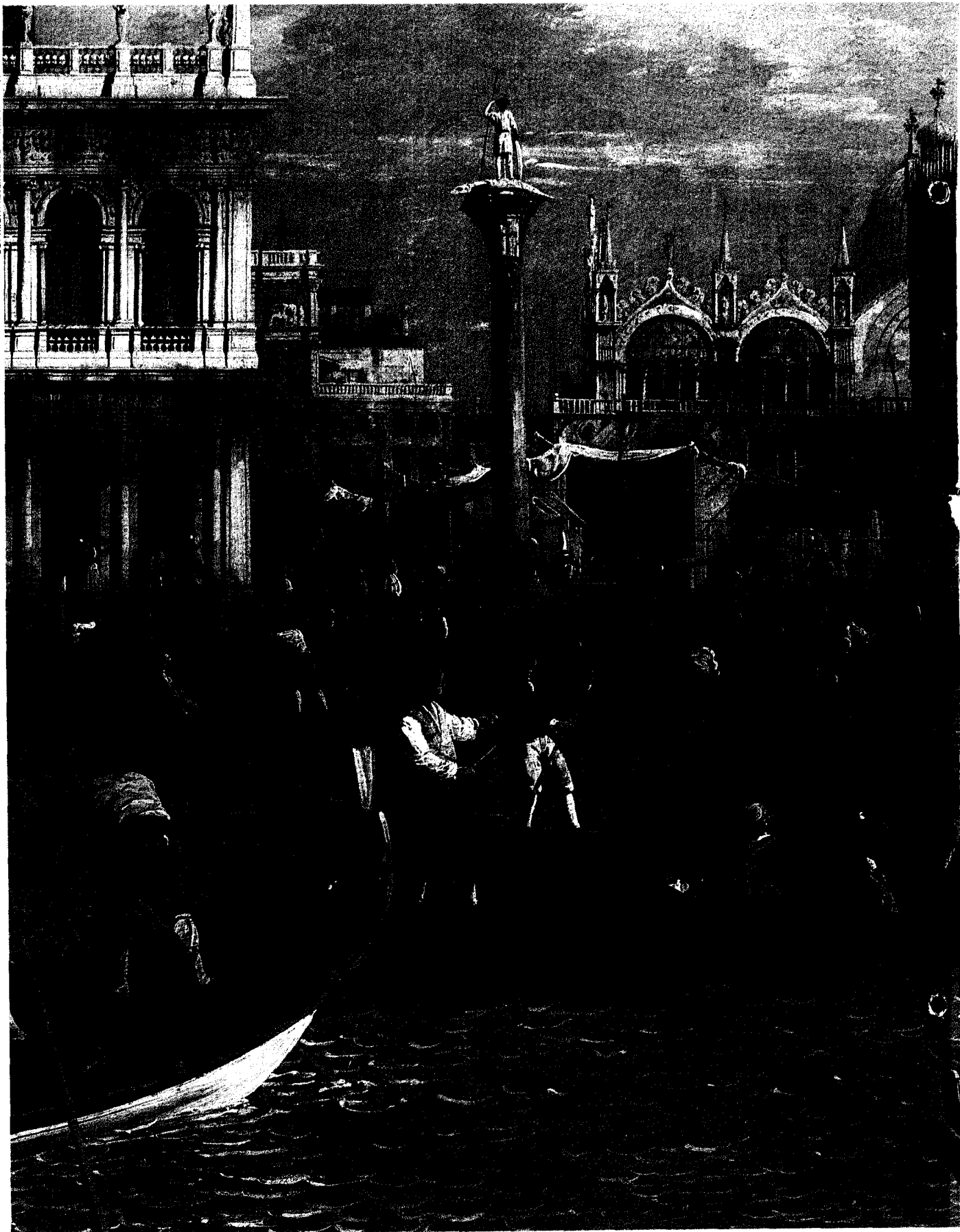
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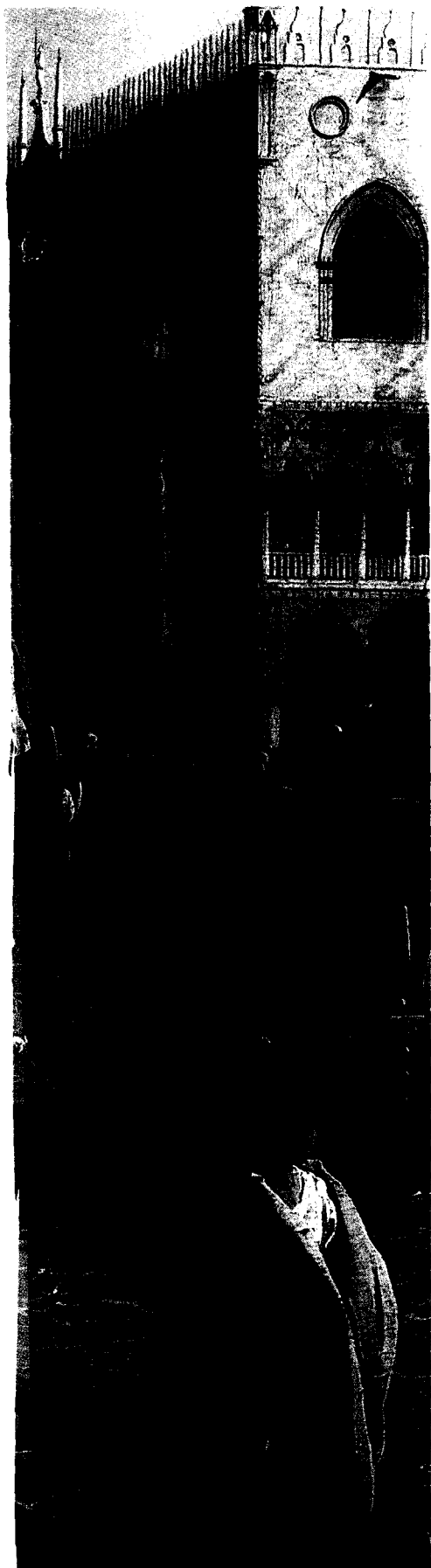
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A detail (above) from The Bacino di San Marco on Ascension Day, oil on canvas, 30 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 49 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (facing page, top)



Art



A Toylike Realm

Canaletto is the master of a miniature world

by Sanford Schwartz

FOR MOST museum-goers, a Canaletto is no more than the quintessential image of Venice, as predictable as an Albers *Homage to the Square*. On the bottom is a turquoise canal or lagoon, dotted with gondolas; above it biscuit-colored palaces and piazzas zoom off in perspective, tiny people stand here and there, catching the light, and at the top is a sourish blue sky. After you have seen one or two Canalettos, you're convinced you know this eighteenth-century painter through and through and can now speed by him in museums. At the recent show at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, the first he ever had in this country, Canaletto actually turned out to be a lot like Albers—or Mondrian, or Barnett Newman, or many twentieth-century artists whose work revolves around a single theme or image. Besides Venice, Canaletto worked in England and in Rome and on the mainland off Venice. But he never made anything other than views, and part of the enjoyment of the show was in seeing how he varied his attack from picture to picture. Canaletto's subject for us is less the places he painted than looking in itself. The pictures seem to

be about how an artist sees and stylizes simultaneously.

A Canaletto view reproduced in a book, or seen from any distance in a gallery, might be no more than a postcard. But up close it is a teeming busy theater set. You must adjust your eyes to a pinpoint scale, and the experience is like peeping. In the Venetian pictures especially, there often seems to be some furthest, deepest point of seeing; it might be a brightly lit but infinitesimally small space between buildings, and finding it, you childishly think you have entered the picture. And the "interior" of a Canaletto is a bit like a miniature de Chirico; it's a stage with deep shadows, shafts of light, and clean, empty streets from which rise endless cardboard arcades. Canaletto and de Chirico paint in a similar showy, one-shot way, with each detail a separate entity that seems to have been dashed on with a fresh coat of paint.

When a detail of a Canaletto is shown, it is usually of his people, and the essence of his art is the relation of his buildings, which seem anchored and immovable, to the figures, which twitter. Canaletto sticks his brightly colored little bubbles, dots, and jagged shafts of

light—his figures—everywhere. He's incredible in suggesting real, particular bodily poses and gestures, even facial expressions, in the tiniest imaginable shapes. He puts them (and the details of buildings) in places where a passerby obviously couldn't see them. And while the relation of the figures to the buildings seems accurate at first, it eventually feels unnatural—aren't the structures too massive? Where is the artist himself standing in order to achieve such a right yet wrong sense of perspective and scale?

Did Canaletto use the camera obscura? This was a little tentlike contraption. One stepped inside and set a piece of paper at a certain angle to a lens opening, and the view the lens pointed to would be reflected on the paper and could be traced by the artist. Historians now seem to believe that Canaletto rarely used the device, but somehow it doesn't matter. His vision of people and space is mechanical. What is enjoyable about his pictures is the way they seem to tingle and blink.

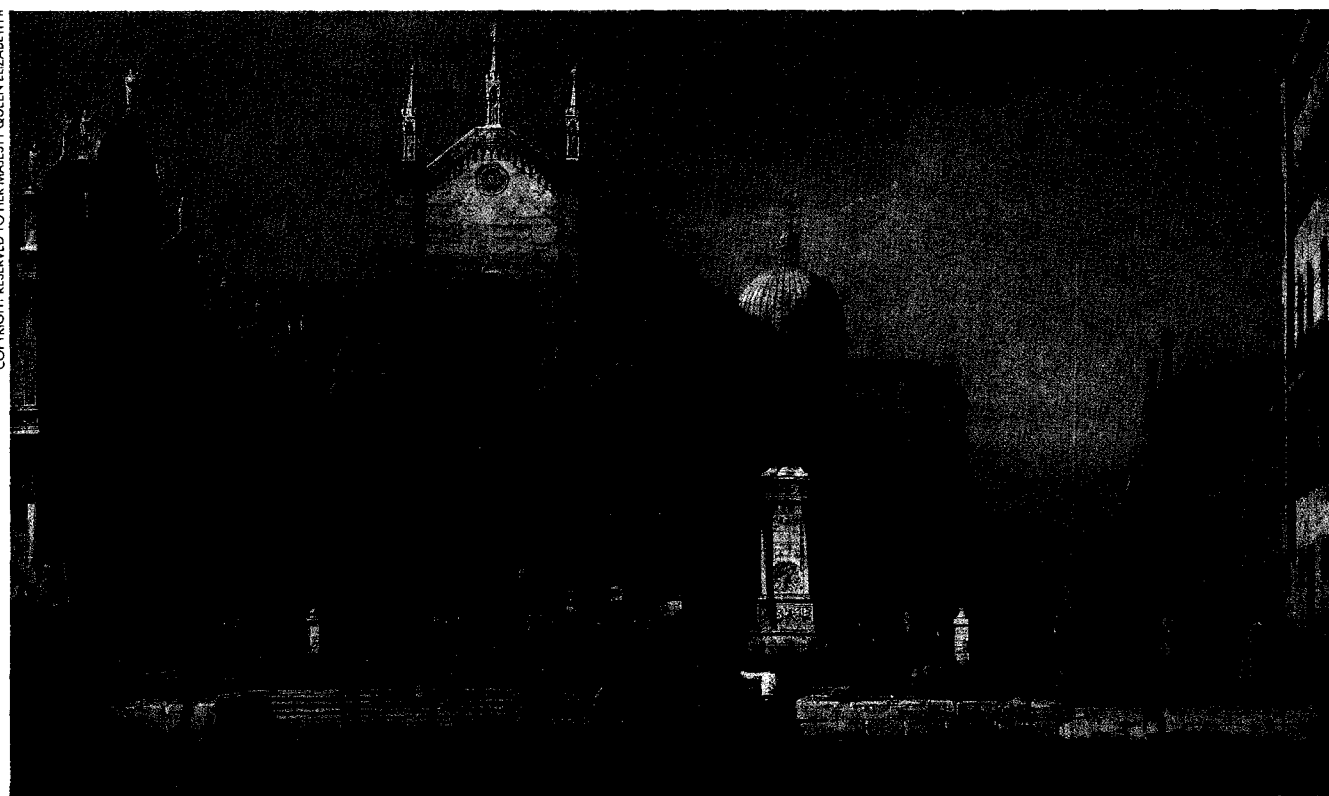
Most of Canaletto's work was done for the tourist trade in Venice. He was a view painter, which was a newly popular line; he wasn't considered a high or fine artist in his time. When a painting academy was founded in the city in

1756, he wasn't asked to be among its founding members. Canaletto remains a well-known artist of the past who isn't exactly an Old Master. There have long been good pictures by him in the National Gallery, in Washington, and in London's National Gallery, but when I turned to various picture books of these museums' twenty-five or hundred most admired pictures, Canaletto wasn't represented. Nor is he mentioned in Janson's standard *History of Art*. And reviews of the Met's show made clear that for some he is still no more than a journeyman. Certainly the exhibition helped perpetuate this notion. There were far too many same-looking Venetian scenes, and while this may give an overall sense of his work, it gives no feeling for the particular sort of steely, wry, and delicate painter that he is at his best.

Canaletto's most ardent admirer may have been Whistler, who said the Venetian artist was comparable to Velázquez. Whistler enjoyed delivering the unexpected remark, and putting Canaletto in the same league as Velázquez—now everybody's idea of the supremely beautiful painter—was a slap at received taste. By a nice coincidence the Met gave Velázquez his first American show at the same time that

Canaletto had his, and I found some sense to Whistler's opinion. On the face of it Velázquez and Canaletto are total opposites: Canaletto is the master of a toylike realm; Velázquez is a portraitist whose pictures produce an unnerving sense that not much is being said about the sitter and nothing more can be said. But neither has an underlying story to tell. Each made an art about the properties, charms, and tricks of sheer seeing. A Velázquez figure or portrait bust is an optically unpinned-down thing; the subject seems to move out of its surrounding space and into our space as we look at it. We have to step back and forth a little for the magic to begin, while with Canaletto we have to step in as close as possible. Do these painters leave very different emotions? Not really. Velázquez fills a viewer with a sense of intelligently muted gorgeousness, and Canaletto, in certain pictures where seemingly the whole world is seen in a state of intense miniaturization, presents a stimulating emptiness.

VERY LITTLE is known about Canaletto. Born Giovanni Antonio Canal (1697–1768), he was the son of a set designer, and worked (along with his brother) for his father as



Campo S.S. Giovanni e Paolo, oil on canvas, 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 30 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

a very young man. He acquired the nickname Canaletto probably in order to distinguish him from his father and because he was short. He was called greedy, but this was probably trumped up by his dealers. Yet it is imaginable that he was mercurial and difficult to deal with, as was also said. He never married or had children, and while there are some terse factual records concerned with particular commissions, and he had a studio and assistants, little or nothing concerning any friendships has survived.

Canaletto's clients were primarily English tourists to Venice, and the majority of his best work is in England (there are very few top-quality Canalettos in Italy). He had a long-standing special relationship with a Joseph Smith, who bought Canalettos for himself and acted as an agent for them in England. The English have done most of the writing about Canaletto, and most jump to tell us that the painter's best work was done in the beginning and that he became dry and mannered. (It's possible to believe the opposite, that as he became more stylized and artificial, his work became stronger.) Michael Levey, who was for many years the director of London's National Gallery, has written a glowing appreciation of the artist for the Met's catalogue. What's odd about it is that Levey left a very different impression in influential earlier accounts. In *Painting in XVIII Century Venice* (1959), a perceptive and elegantly written study, he presents Canaletto in an obligatory mood, and in *Rococo to Revolution* (1966), about eighteenth-century painting in general—it, too, is first-rate—he ignores him entirely.

Levey speaks for nearly all English writers in calling *The Stonemason's Yard* (it's in London's National Gallery) Canaletto's supreme effort. In this large and early painting his people dot a cavernous view into a back yard. Stonemasons chop away, a kid is peeing, and a mother is screaming. In the distance are boats and churches, and laundry flaps in the air. The picture has been admired in part, I think, because it presents an un-Venetian Canaletto; the somewhat dreary and hemmed-in workaday scene recalls Dickens. Yet there are many more pictures in which his subject isn't tourist Venice, and they're more exciting than *The Stonemason's Yard*.



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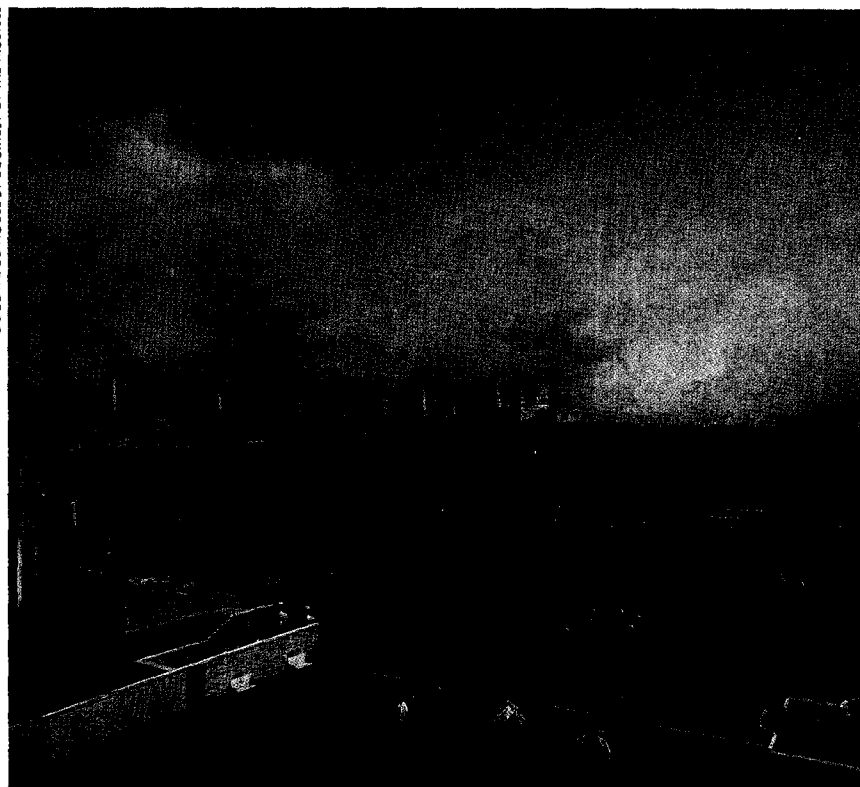
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The Thames from Richmond House, oil on canvas, 42 × 46 in.

CANALETTO WILL always be associated with Venice, of course, but I found that his most personal, poetic, and dreamy pictures were from trips to the mainland off Venice and from his stay in England. Canaletto's reputation is that of an insider; he is an ultimate souvenir-maker in the ultimate souvenir locale. Yet on and off he worked as a tourist himself, and the pictures from his travels are wonderfully wide-eyed, as if of places seen for the first time.

In pictures of Padua, Mestre, and their environs, he presents public squares and fields and marshy outskirts. We might be on a train, passing by a sleepy backwater nowhere. It's as if Canaletto were the first painter to show us what the suburbs looked like.

Canaletto spent some ten years in England, and his English pictures present still another sort of artist. He painted many scenes of London, and there were commissions for this castle or church, or the grounds of that park. Sometimes he was an uninspired recorder of a dull building. But *Old Walton Bridge*, which shows a bridge spanning a little river, with gents and locals dotting the scene here and there, casts a spell. The bridge itself seems to jump right out of the picture; we be-

lieve we see its every beam. It's like a Sol LeWitt Minimalist sculpture made out of painted white matchsticks.

Canaletto is more original, though, in a number of centerless panoramas—pictures of yards, parks, streets, and long-distance views of rather underpopulated places. With his eye accustomed to jam-packed Venice, London and its surrounding sites must have been like the moon to him—or so he makes it seem. In a couple of large, squarish views made for the Duke of Richmond he presents a vantage point rarely seen in paintings of any period: it's like a crane shot taken from incredibly high up, with everything sparkingly lucid for miles. One picture is a view down into the courtyard of Richmond House and off into the city, the other a view across a terrace and up the Thames. These pictures present views from such a height and angle that we uncannily feel that we ourselves are seeing the scenes; we have the distinct sensation of being at a window.

In the Thames picture, a nominee for his single finest work, our eyes keep moving out, beyond the sunny terrace with its strolling families and couples, across the river, which is abuzz with boats, to St. Paul's and smaller church steeples in the dis-

tance, and then further out, to a vast nothing. The picture is the work of a Romantic artist ahead of his time; it has the Romantic mood of expectant stillness, when everything is in readiness for some revelation.

CANALETTO EVENTUALLY returned to Venice for good, and his most compelling later works are his drawings. All through his life, actually, Canaletto produced pen-and-ink drawings that are self-contained works of art in themselves. Making shapes and space with cross-hatchings or units of parallel lines, and always conveying an airy, breathing, fabric-like texture, they recall Dufy, van Gogh, and Cy Twombly, and some of Canaletto's interiors, which are like TV images with bad reception, recall Richard Artschwager.

In his later drawings Canaletto surpassed himself. Shading the lines with washes, he makes it seem as if everything—the movement of an arm, a pot of flowers—were seen through glass on a rainy day. The drawings of masses of people in a square are staggering. There seem to be hundreds of figures in these relatively small works, and air can be felt circulating around each one. Their heads are woozily formed, with overhanging brows and dark eye sockets, and they often wear huge floppy hats. They're so many bobbins at the bottom of a vista; but they have more of a presence—it's a cartoonish presence—than any of his earlier figures.

At his death Canaletto was found to have been living a somewhat spartan and frugal existence. The vogue for his pictures had long since passed. But it's difficult to imagine him ever living it up. He was a mixture of hardworking businessman, master craftsman, and fanatical, one-track poet. His art was about the beauty of seeing and about his magicianlike technical skill. It's as though he always wanted a viewer to wonder, How does he do it? The only remotely personal words that we have from him refer simultaneously to sight and to his sense of self-esteem. His last signed picture, made a few years before his death, is a drawing of the interior of San Marco. On it he inscribed, after his name, "Have made the present drawing, of the Musicians who Sing in the Ducal Church of S. Marco in Venice at the age of 68 years Without Spectacles, The year 1766." □

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Books

The Wickedness That Was Rome

by Bernard Knox

CLIGULA:
The Corruption of Power
by Anthony A. Barrett.
Yale University Press, \$27.50.

CLAUDIUS
by Barbara Levick.
Yale University Press, \$25.00.

PRESIDENT MITTERRAND'S recent description of Margaret Thatcher's face—"the eyes of Caligula and the mouth of Marilyn Monroe"—must have left most of his audience wondering what Caligula's eyes looked like. (Suetonius says that they were "sunken" and Pliny that they were "staring.") As for the Prime Minister, whatever may have been her reaction to the second item, she was almost certainly taken aback by the comparison to Caligula, even though his favorite quotation from an early Latin poet—"Oderint dum metuant," ("Let them hate, provided that they fear")—might well serve as Thatcher's political motto. But Caligula is the classic boogeyman of the Western historical tradition: a lustful, incestuous, murderous, sadistic, insane tyrant, who, not content to wait for the posthumous deification that had been decreed by the Senate for his predecessors Augustus and Tiberius, announced to his

terrified subjects that he was a living god. Suetonius, our principal ancient source, starts his *Life of Caligula* with an account of the man's political career and then proceeds, "So much for the Emperor; now I have to tell the story of the monster." In 1945 Albert Camus put him on stage as a sort of existentialist hero, convinced by the death of his beloved sister Drusilla that life is a cruel, meaningless farce and determined to demonstrate the fact to his unfortunate fellow citizens. Robert Graves's portrait of him in *I, Claudius* (1934) was later re-created in a television serial that had huge audiences on both sides of the Atlantic eagerly awaiting the next installment.

Caligula has had a bad press. Tacitus and Suetonius, the two historical writers nearest to him in time (but both born after his death, in A.D. 41), are representatives of an aristocratic, senatorial tradition bitterly hostile to the Julio-Claudians, the first five Emperors. The part of Tacitus' *Annals* that dealt with Caligula's four years in power has not survived, but it is clear from remarks in the extant portion that the

historian's judgment must have been severe; he quotes a contemporary's comment on Caligula's slavish subservience to his predecessor Tiberius—"there was never a better slave or a worse master." As it is, the only full account of Caligula's life and principate is that of Suetonius, a writer uncritical of his sources and, as Anthony Barrett puts it in *Caligula: The Corruption of Power*, one whose "main failing is not, apparently, that he fabricates material, but rather that he has a tendency to believe, or at least to record, the worst, and is unable to resist colourful anecdotes, especially if they reflect badly on his subject." Barrett's book was "undertaken without *parti pris* and without preconceptions"; it "does not attempt to rehabilitate Caligula." Barrett offers "a reconstruction of events" but warns that the opportunities "to look beyond the events themselves and to identify significant trends" are limited; the reconstruction of events is itself, given the contradictions and omissions of the sources, often "hypothetical."

The traditional image of Caligula as an insane monster has its weak points. As Barrett demonstrates in impressive detail, the provinces of the vast empire seem to have been the beneficiaries of orderly, stable government under Caligula, and he left the imperial finances in such good shape that his successor Claudius could abolish some taxes and launch expensive building programs. On the empire's disputed frontiers, where the legions faced Germans across the Rhine and Parthians in the East, the status quo was maintained. Certainly Caligula savagely punished people he thought were conspiring against him (and most of them probably were), but the total



of named victims was not a large one, and the popular reaction in Rome to his assassination was anger. Barrett suggests that the systematic blackening of Caligula's name was a political necessity for his successor. For Claudius, who owed his position to the murder of his predecessor, it was "important . . . to promote the notion that Caligula had died, not because the imperial system was inherently evil, but because Caligula was an inherently evil emperor."

The "imperial system," developed by Augustus, had a built-in defect—the problem of succession. Augustus had engineered a situation in which, through control of the legions and his prestige as the restorer of peace after generations of civil war, he had a firm enough grip on power to share some of it with the senatorial aristocracy and maintain a fiction that he was merely *princeps*, first citizen, in a republic. Though he could designate a successor, it had to be a man experienced in office and adept in politics if the power base he had created was to be preserved. When he died, in A.D. 14, he had been in control of the Roman world for some forty years, but the members of his family who had been appointed to high office so that they could take his place had died before him one by one. For the last ten years of his life his stepson Tiberius had been associated with him in office, and just before Augustus died he made him co-regent, with instructions to designate as his successor his nephew Germanicus, the popular commander of the Rhine legions, who was also the father of Caligula. But Germanicus died five years after Augustus, and Tiberius, though a capable military officer and administrator, lacked the political skills that had enabled Augustus to keep the Roman aristocracy acquiescent in his supremacy. He left Rome for the island of Capri, where he spent the last ten years of his life, communicating with the Senate by letter—and suspecting, probably with good reason, conspiracies against him right and left. He abandoned the direction of affairs at Rome to his confidant Sejanus, the commander of the Praetorian Guard, who proceeded to build a power base of his own.

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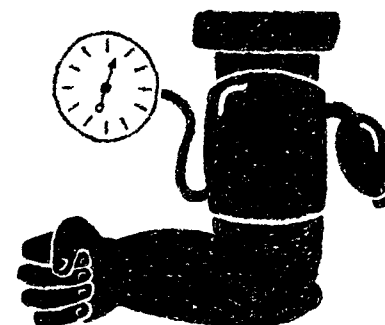
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THE PERILS OF
"VICTORY"

by John Lewis Gaddis

Now that the United States and its allies have prevailed in the Cold War, the West must think seriously—and quickly—about how to avoid squandering the opportunities at hand. Unfortunately, the author writes, we are almost certainly not up to this task.



THE POLITICS
OF RIGHTS

by Fred Siegel

Ordinary political questions are increasingly being turned into matters of right that demand judicial protection. The tensions between courts and legislatures are playing themselves out in a process of almost continuous constitutional combat.

better paid than the men of the legions at the frontiers and were fiercely loyal to their master; they were to play the role of kingmaker in the years to come. Sejanus concentrated the guard's units in barracks just outside Rome; he also filled military commands at the frontiers with his own nominees. He was clearly planning to establish himself as Tiberius' successor, perhaps to supplant him. But Tiberius struck first. He instructed one of the officers of the guard, Sutorius Macro, to assume command and win the loyalty of the troops by offering a bounty; he then sent the Senate a long letter (*"verbosa et grandis epistula,"* Juvenal called it) that kept everyone, especially Sejanus, in suspense until in the final paragraphs it denounced him as a traitor. Sejanus was executed, and Tiberius named as his successors Caligula, son of Germanicus, and Gemellus, his own grandson.

When Tiberius died, on Capri, in A.D. 37, Macro, now Caligula's man, submitted his master's name to the Senate, which granted him full powers amid general rejoicing. Caligula began his career in office as an almost universal favorite in Rome, as he had been as a boy among his father's soldiers on the Rhine. ("Caligula" is an affectionate nickname—"Bootsie"; the Roman equivalent of the G.I. boot was called *caliga*, and the general's young son wore a diminutive pair of them specially made for him.) But the initial enthusiasm did not last long. Six months after he assumed power, he fell ill; after his recovery he seemed to be a different man, suspicious of conspiracy on all sides. The executions of the young Gemellus, his associate in power, and of Macro, who had paved the way for his accession, were the first of many. It now became clear that the Augustan accommodation was a thing of the past; the Emperor was an autocrat, not *princeps*. A series of conspiracies, real or suspected, were punished with ever-increasing severity until, in A.D. 41, Cassius Chaerea, an officer of the Praetorian Guard, killed Caligula as he made his way from a performance in the theater to lunch in the palace.

The consuls called a meeting of the Senate, which proceeded to act as if it were about to restore the republic. But the Praetorian Guard had decided otherwise. They took Caligula's uncle Claudius to their barracks and saluted

him as Emperor. The Senate soon came to its senses and accepted what it had not the power to oppose.

ON THE DETAILS of Caligula's assassination our sources present a very confusing picture; both Barrett and Barbara Levick, in her book on Claudius, attempt to make sense of it. Both dismiss the account given by Suetonius and the much later Greek historian Dio Cassius that in the chaos following Caligula's death—his German bodyguard ran amok and began killing indiscriminately—Claudius hid in a closet in the palace, where he was discovered by a Praetorian Guardsman who had the bright idea of taking him off to the barracks and proclaiming him Emperor. Claudius came to power, Suetonius says, *"mirabili casu,"* "by an astonishing accident." Barrett comments on Claudius' assumption of power within twenty-four hours of Caligula's death: it was "an operation . . . so remarkably smooth that it provokes questions about the possible role of Claudius himself, or at least of those around him." He comes to the cautious conclusion that Caligula's death was the outcome of a conspiracy that involved many individuals acting from different motives and that "Claudius may or may not have been a party to such a plot from the outset." Levick has a more positive and sophisticated interpretation. Claudius' "precise role cannot be determined," she writes. "Very likely it was kept indeterminate, his agents having to interpret or anticipate his wishes." This was, as she says, a "technique, disreputable, essentially infantile, but useful . . . that of allowing others to act or engineering them into it, while the principal continues 'ignorant' of what is going on." The technique has been "adopted," as she says, "by others, among them Henry II of England" (the murder of Thomas à Becket) "and Elizabeth the First" (the execution of Mary Queen of Scots) "and by Reagan in the U.S.A. against Iran and Nicaragua."

Claudius was an unlikely candidate for supreme power; he was "the ugly duckling of Augustus' family." He had some kind of physical defect—the symptoms have been described as the result of poliomyelitis or, more recently, as "cerebral palsy involving some degree of spasticity." However, Claudius showed no sign of the epilepsy

and mental retardation that in some cases may accompany cerebral palsy. Under Tiberius and Caligula he may have slyly exaggerated his apparent unfitness for high office; as a possible successor he would have been an object of suspicion and a focus for intrigue. Indeed, later, when he was Emperor, he claimed that he had saved his life under Caligula by pretending to be stupid. His formula for survival was to be "an attendant lord . . . Full of high sentence, but a bit obtruse; /At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—/Almost, at times, the Fool."

He was none of these things. He was the most learned and intellectual of the Julio-Claudians. His early exclusion from active political life (Augustus feared that his mannerisms and physical awkwardness might bring discredit on the imperial family) left him leisure for literary pursuits. He wrote in Greek an Etruscan history in twenty volumes and a Carthaginian history in eight. In Latin he wrote a history of Rome that, according to Suetonius, began with the assassination of Julius Caesar and then skipped to the end of the civil wars and the establishment of the principate of Augustus, thus discreetly omitting such matters as the alliance of Octavian (not yet Augustus) with Mark Antony and their proscription of 43 B.C., in which more than 2,000 prominent Romans were murdered, the orator Cicero among them.

These were the pursuits of his years of isolation and neglect (though he continued to work on the Roman history when he became Emperor); his interest in these studies was genuine, but they were also part of his strategy for survival in the dangerous atmosphere of the imperial court, where superior capability or wide popularity might arouse the suspicions of Tiberius or, worse still, of Caligula. Claudius might have replied, if asked, like Sieyès, what he had done during the Terror, "*J'ai vécu*." It was no mean achievement.

LEVICK QUOTES A statement by one of her teachers, C. E. Stevens, that "Claudius was the first Roman Emperor." Perhaps Caligula has a better claim to that title, for it was to him that the Senate, overjoyed to welcome the son of Germanicus as successor to his grim and suspicious uncle, voted en bloc the powers that

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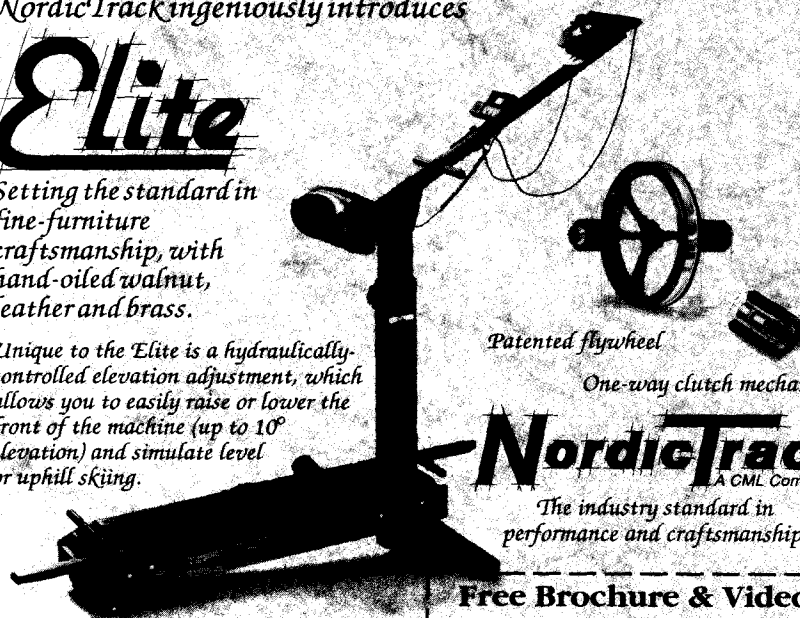
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Augustus had so carefully disguised as legitimate—"a bundle of powers collected at different times, cemented by the authority of success, and reinforced by the ultimate sanction of force," to quote Levick's apt formulation. Barrett, in fact, blames the Senate for what happened:

To make an inexperienced and almost unknown young man, brought up under a series of aged and repressive guardians, master of the world, almost literally overnight, on the sole recommendation that his father had been a thoroughly decent fellow, was to court disaster in a quite irresponsible fashion. The Romans may have resented the subsequent burden of autocracy, but it was an autocracy largely of their own making.

The Senate granted Caligula absolute power in a burst of enthusiasm, but conceded it to Claudius with reluctant acceptance of superior force. Unlike his predecessor, however, Claudius held power long enough (A.D. 41–54) to consolidate and make use of it; his reign is distinguished by a number of impressive achievements. Not least among them is the conquest of Britain, in 43. Ever since Julius Caesar's two incursions almost a hundred years earlier, Roman policy had been to maintain fictional dominion over and trade relations with the tribes on the British coasts opposite Gaul which had surrendered to Caesar. The powerful tribe of the Catuvellauni, farther inland, had of recent years, under its King Cunobelin (Shakespeare's Cymbeline), cultivated friendly relations with Rome. But when Cunobelin died, sometime after 39, his sons Caratacus and Togodumnus moved against the coastal tribes, a direct challenge to the Roman requirement that the coasts of Gaul should be free of contact with independent peoples hostile to Rome. In 43 southern Britain was subdued in a short campaign for which Claudius arrived in person, with reinforcements and war elephants, to take part in the final advance and the occupation of Camulodunum (Colchester), the capital of the Catuvellauni. The conquest of the Midlands, the North, and Wales was to take many more years, but Britain was now part of the empire, and, as the archaeology of recent years has amply demonstrated, under several centuries of Roman rule it became a re-

markably prosperous and civilized province.

This does not seem like the work of the clumsy stutterer portrayed in the biographical sources. The success of the campaign is of course due to the general in the field, but it was Claudius who appointed him and mobilized the resources of the empire in support. Though the Greek historian Appian, writing in the next century, claimed (in Levick's words) that "Britain continued to be a drain on manpower beyond anything it could contribute in taxation or materials," the conquest, to quote Levick (who tends to agree with those who think it was a mistake), was for Claudius "the greatest event of the reign, and one of his prime claims to rule."

Claudius was also one of the great builders of Rome. He developed on a grand scale the port of Ostia, the destination of the ships that brought the grain of Egypt to feed the population of Rome. He repaired old aqueducts, including the one that brings water to the Fontana di Trevi, where tourists throw their coins, and built new ones, like the "Claudian aqueduct" that still, in its ruined state, towers over the Campagna beside the Via Appia Antica. Claudius also began the draining of the Fucine Lake, to provide rich arable land close to home, a project not completed until the nineteenth century.

His misfortunes stemmed from his private rather than his public life. He was, to use a Roman term of strong disapproval, *uxorius*—too fond of his wife, or, rather, since he had two in succession while he was Emperor, of his wives.

The first wife, Messalina, has become proverbial. But, though we can doubt the truth of Juvenal's brilliant picture of her hurrying off, as soon as Claudius was asleep, to a downtown brothel where she took on all comers until closing time, there is no doubt that she did, while still married to Claudius, go through a form of marriage with a prominent member of the senatorial aristocracy, one Gaius Silius. This was probably part of a conspiracy that threatened Claudius' power and perhaps his life, but Claudius could bring himself to deal with it, by executing both partners, only at the very last moment and at the stern insistence of his advisers.

Claudius' second wife, Agrippina,

was later to secure the succession for Nero, her son by a previous marriage, by enlisting the support of the commander of the Praetorian Guard. Claudius' son by Messalina, Britannicus, who had an equal if not a better claim, did not long outlive his father, who died in 54. Agrippina may well, as our sources assert, have hastened the day of Nero's accession by poisoning Claudius with a dish of his favorite mushrooms.

IN THESE TWO authoritative but highly readable books the defects and achievements of the two Emperors are assessed critically and with full exploitation of the nonliterary sources—epigraphical, archaeological, and, especially important, numismatic—that often throw light on or raise doubts about the evidence provided by the ancient writers. The result is a sober, balanced estimate.

And yet the lurid, half-legendary figures of the Julio-Claudian Emperors as we see them through the eyes of Suetonius and Tacitus haunt our imagination still; they are powerful images of what can happen when absolute power over vast regions is concentrated in the hands of one person. Faced with the most extravagant of the biographer's tales—for example, that Caligula believed he was a god on earth, or that he built a bridge of boats, more than four kilometers long, over part of the Bay of Naples and then charged across it in a chariot, for no other reason than that Tiberius' astrologer had said Caligula had no more chance of becoming Emperor than he had of riding over the Bay of Naples—we suspend belief.

Perhaps we do so too readily. For similar examples of megalomania and self-delusion in the minds of absolute rulers we have only to look at recent events in a country that was once a Roman province and still bears the Roman name. We have only to look at Nicolae Ceaușescu, who destroyed the historic center of Bucharest to build himself a huge palace, complete with tunnels for the rapid deployment of his Praetorian Guard, the Securitate; and at his wife, a high school dropout, who rebuked the tribunal that condemned her and her husband to death because it failed to treat her with the respect due to the president of the Academy of Sciences. □

American Medici

by David M. Kennedy

THE HOUSE OF MORGAN:
An American Banking Dynasty and
the Rise of Modern Finance
by Ron Chernow.
Atlantic Monthly Press, \$29.95.

THERE WERE TWO J. P. Morgans. Literally. Though obscurely conflated in popular memory into what Ron Chernow calls a single "composite beast," one was a man of the nineteenth century, the other largely a man of the twentieth. John Pierpont Morgan, Sr., was born in 1837 and died in 1913. His son, John Pierpont Morgan, Jr., lived from 1867 to 1943. Their enduring achievement was the fabled House of Morgan. It sprang from a merchant-banking partnership between the first J. P.'s father, Junius Spencer Morgan, and George Peabody, in London in 1854. Over the next century Junius and the two J. P. Morgans erected on that foundation a financial empire that included the banking and investment firms of Morgan Grenfell, in London; Morgan et Compagnie, in Paris; Drexel, Morgan, in Philadelphia; and Morgan Guaranty Trust and Morgan Stanley, in New York.

There have also been two images of the House of Morgan figuratively inscribed in the history books. The first is the familiar financial Gorgon of populist mythology. Matthew Josephson did much to popularize this portrait with *The Robber Barons*, which found a receptive audience among Depression-plagued Americans when it was published, in 1934. Josephson described the Morgans, and indeed all investment bankers, as men with "glittering eyes of greed" who ran with the "swine, jackals, and wolves," and he borrowed from Balzac to depict them as "lynx-natured, thin-lipped, keen-eyed, hard-favored." Josephson rendered the elder J. P. Morgan as an "ugly, lowering figure" of "tremendous arrogance and cynicism," a "crafty . . . pugnacious" man who was "imperiously proud, rude, and lonely, intensely undemocratic," and who

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The "West Bank" and Gaza Should Israel withdraw from the territories?

The "intifada," the uprising of Arab Palestinians in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and Gaza has been going on since December of 1987. It has so far caused over 500 deaths. Many believe that the conflict would end if Israel were to withdraw from the territories, cede them to the Palestinian Arabs, and allow them to create a Palestinian state in them.

What are the facts?

■ The suggestion that Israel should give up the territories and that good things would flow from that is based on two assumptions, namely 1) that the demands of the Palestinian Arabs for independence from Israel are the source of the Arab conflict with Israel; and 2) that Israel's withdrawal from the territories and the creation of a Palestinian state in them would satisfy the aspirations of the Palestinian Arabs, that it would end the hostility of the Arab nations against Israel, and that it would restore peace to the area.

■ Unfortunately, both of these assumptions are not in accord with reality. The desire of the Arab nations to destroy Israel has been unrelenting from the day of the creation of Israel in 1948. It has given rise to five major wars, has caused tens of thousands of casualties, and untold destruction. The PLO, whose covenant—never changed and never amended—unequivocally calls for the destruction of Israel, was founded in 1964, long before Israel's administration in the territories. Thus, the almost single-minded obsession of the Arabs to destroy Israel, and not Israel's refusal to accede to the creation of a Palestinian state, is the cause of the never-ending conflict in the area.

■ It is difficult for the Western mind to understand the depth of passion on the part of the Arabs for the destruction of Israel. Among reasonable people, most conflicts might eventually be amenable to peaceful and rational solution. But in the Arab-Israel conflict, no such solution is in the cards for the foreseeable future. The reason is that 300 million Arabs consider the very existence of Israel an intolerable offense to their sense of history and destiny. It is not Israel's administration of the "West Bank" that is unacceptable to the Arabs; it is the very existence of Israel. There is no reason to believe that Israel's withdrawal and the establishment of a Palestinian state would appease the Arabs and induce them to make peace with Israel.

■ One can speculate as to what would be likely to happen if Israel—inadvisedly or ultimately bowing to pressure—were to yield the "West Bank" to Arab control. The murderous fratricidal passions that have been played out in Lebanon in the last fifteen years would be repeated in even more violent form. It is an improbable expectation that a state dominated by the murderous PLO would be the first Arab state ever to adhere to anything resembling democratic and human rights principles or that it would be a friend of the United States, and not an eager pawn of the Soviet Union.

■ The Lebanon slaughter would be shifted to the new Palestinian state, with Israel being a much readier target of its fury. A Palestinian Arab state on the "West Bank" would cut through Jerusalem, touch on the suburbs of Tel Aviv, and have a long border, nine to fifteen miles from the sea, with Israel's most thickly populated areas. Palestinian militias, armed, not with gasoline bombs and stones, but with helicopters, missiles, artillery and automatic weapons, would have Israeli pedestrians within rifle range, and Zion Square in Jerusalem and Ben Gurion airport within mortar range.

Few responsible elements in Israel's government and society wish to annex Gaza and the territories of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"). But also, hardly any responsible elements would consider relinquishing those territories for the creation of a Palestinian state. The Palestinian Arabs enjoy full civil rights and have been offered free elections and full autonomy by Israel, in line with Israel's commitments in the Camp David Accords. Moreover, Israel is ready and has always been ready to discuss the permanent status of the territories with responsible Palestinian representatives three years after the implementation of the autonomy. The situation of Israel and the territories is a bad one—no doubt about it. But the alternative to bad is not necessarily good. In this case, at least at the present time, the alternative would likely be a catastrophe, which, in its consequences, could even put the horrible situation of Lebanon in the shade. Real peace in the area will not come by Israel's yielding minimum strategic depth to its mortal enemies. It can only come about by the eventual rise of democratic governments in the "front-line" Arab states, governments that would accept Israel's existence and could learn to live in peaceful co-existence with it.

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petulantly flung food at his delinquent servants. Even his philanthropic benefactions Josephson considered "barbaric extravagance." Lewis Corey, another Depression-era writer, painted the senior J. P. Morgan as a "truculent and domineering character, animated by an overwhelming urge to power," "the uncrowned American money king," "arrogant, arbitrary, massive." This unlovely image of the Morgans and all they represented is by now a commonplace; it has entered into the vernacular of American political culture.

A second and vividly contrasting image of the Morgans and their house emerges from the pages of Ron Chernow's book. His Morgans are not the taloned vultures of predatory capitalism but the cooing doves of industrial peace and the unblinking owls of far-visioned statecraft. They are not heartless bankers but literary aesthetes, closet romantics, even voluptuaries. Josephson's J. P. Morgan, Sr., ruthlessly trampled his hapless foes; Chernow's J. P. Morgan, Jr., tenderly reads Dickens's *Christmas Carol* to his children (from Dickens's original manuscript). Here is a capitalist with a human face.

Chernow's tone is always sympathetic and at times almost reverential. "Much of our story," he writes,

revolves around this chiseled marble building [at 23 Wall Street] and the presidents and prime ministers, moguls and millionaires who marched up its steps. With the records now available, we can follow them inside the world's most secretive bank.

Thus parting the veil on the sanctum sanctorum of finance capitalism, Chernow takes the reader on a 700-page junket from Charles Dickens's London to Tom Wolfe's New York, with extended side trips to Germany, France, Italy, Japan, Mexico, and Brazil. He displays not only a clutch of Morgans but also a full wallet of other imposing personalities. They include Dwight Morrow, who was "Morgan's philoso-



pher-king," the father-in-law of Charles Lindbergh, and an ambassador to Mexico; Thomas Lamont, "the Morgan empire's secretary of state," hobnobbing with Mussolini and Herbert Hoover and Walter Lippmann; the silky and cerebral Russell C. Leflingwell, perhaps the brainiest of all the Morgan partners and, whether incidentally or not, one of the few Democrats to dwell in the House of Morgan.

Having an imperial-scale subject, Chernow has written an imperial-sized book, a tome of paperweight heft and full-vacation's-reading length. Yet it is never dull. Chernow, a seasoned financial reporter and a former economic researcher at the Twentieth Century Fund, is a gifted guide on this fascinating historical journey. He deftly mixes biography with economics and explicates arcane matters of high finance with sparkling clarity.

Chernow does not ignore the controversies that have haunted the House of Morgan, from Arsène Pujo's investigation of the "Money Trust" in 1912-1913 to Ferdinand Pecora's revelations of Wall Street malfeasance in 1933-1934, to the years-long trial of Morgan Stanley before Judge Harold Medina in the 1950s. But, at least until the gogo 1970s and 1980s, his Morgans and their minions consistently appear as

the avuncular pacifiers of raw, adolescent capitalism, lonely and selfless patrician seers who struggle to calm the heaving seas of modern history. Indeed, Chernow often seems so impressed with the centrality of his subject that the reader may wonder whether he considers the history of the modern world as context for or footnote to the Morgan saga.

TO BE SURE, the Morgans stood at or near the center of a lot of history. In the nineteenth century, when governments lacked the sophisticated tax machinery necessary to finance costly wars, the great banking houses functioned as de facto treasuries or central banks, organizing gigantic bond issues whose success or failure could make or break states. Junius Morgan ascended into the select company of the City of London's premier financial powers when he syndicated a \$50 million loan to France to wage the Franco-Prussian War, in 1870. A quarter century later J. P. Morgan, Sr., rescued the Cleveland Administration from bankruptcy by organizing a \$62 million bond issue, half of it to be taken in Europe, that kept the United States on the gold standard. This notorious deal evoked outraged condemnation from Populists, who considered the national government beholden to the bankers, and the bankers, in turn, beholden to alien, aristocratic Europe. There was, in fact, much truth in both those accusations. The scanty government over which Grover Cleveland presided was sadly inadequate to cope with a big financial crisis on its own. And Morgan's rescue of the gold standard in 1895 underlined the disagreeable fact, Chernow writes, "that America was still financially dependent on Europe." Nearly two decades earlier Junius Spencer Morgan had been lauded at a testimonial dinner at Delmonico's in New York for "upholding unsullied the honor of America in the tabernacle of the Old World." This was the voice not

only of cultural deference but of cold pecuniary calculus.

Within a few years of Morgan's gold rescue—certainly by the end of the First World War—the center of global financial power had migrated from London to New York. Holding positions at both ends of the trans-Atlantic axis, the House of Morgan profited first as the conduit for European investment in America and then as the organizer of U.S. investment in Europe. But though the Morgans had helped to bring this shift about, it did not make them any more popular on Main Street. As advocates of internationalism, opposed to high protective tariffs and in favor of canceling Allied war debts to the U.S. Treasury, they collided head-on with the tightfisted, provincial isolationism of America in the 1920s.

The Morgans also aroused popular wrath for the practice of "Morganizing" American businesses, especially railroads, in the Depression of the 1890s. Overbuilding and the ruinous rate wars that ensued—so-called cut-throat competition—bankrupted countless companies and jeopardized investors' money. Morgan's remedies for this destructive chaos varied in their technical details—mergers, voting trusts, and holding companies were frequently employed devices—but had always the common objective of dampening competition and making the business environment more stable and predictable.

Morganization was most spectacularly applied to the steel industry in 1901. The House of Morgan patched together America's first billion-dollar corporation, United States Steel, out of several steelmaking companies that were threatening to encroach on one another's markets. The new corporation, with Morgan partners strategically seated on its board of directors, would see to it that they did not.

The formation of U.S. Steel was criticized then and later as owing less to the logic of economic efficiency than to "promoters' profits"—the fat commissions (some \$57 million) that the Morgan syndicate received for underwriting the issue of U.S. Steel stock. Chernow disagrees. In that age of scarce investment capital, he argues, the losses that attended unbridled competition did not merely punish investors but also exacted heavy social

costs. By cutting the wasteful costs of competition, Morganization amounted to "a form of national industrial policy"—another social function, like central banking, that Morgan and his colleagues graciously performed "before economic management was established as a government responsibility."

AS THE TWENTIETH century opened, some politicians—notably Theodore Roosevelt—were beginning to consider "industrial policy" a government prerogative, not a private one. Roosevelt and Morgan clashed, most conspicuously in the Northern Securities case, when TR brought a successful antitrust suit against the recently Morganized Northern Pacific Railroad. When Roosevelt some years later departed for an African safari, allegedly Morgan growled that he hoped some lion would do its duty.

Chernow makes clear, however, that Roosevelt and Morgan were "secret blood brothers." They both scorned the pell-mell, profligate individualism of the nineteenth-century economy and sought the key to orderly, riskless growth by big, efficiently integrated enterprises. The truly mortal enemy of the Morgans was not Theodore Roosevelt but Louis Brandeis. Chernow rightly calls him "the most cunning and resourceful foe the House of Morgan would ever face." Brandeis was no rustic Populist, sputtering with resentment at plutocratic opulence. He was a shrewd and worldly lawyer who was to serve for more than two decades on the Supreme Court. For him, the issue was not wealth but power. "Vast fortunes like those of the Astors are no doubt regrettable," Brandeis wrote in his celebrated tract of 1914, *Other People's Money and How the Bankers Use It*.

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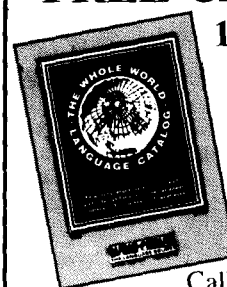
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web of interlocking directorates that Morganization had created. "He argued," Chernow writes,

for an arms-length distance between bankers and companies. For Brandeis, bankers who sat on corporate boards were in a conflict-of-interest situation. Far from being neutral confidants of companies, they were tempted to load up clients with unneeded bonds or charge them inflated commissions. . . . The Brandeis critique was predicated not on government regulation of monopolies but on breaking them up and reverting to a small-scale competitive economy. Over time, this view would prove far more threatening to the House of Morgan than the trust-busting of Teddy Roosevelt and other supporters of large-scale industry.

"For the House of Morgan," Chernow writes, "Louis Brandeis was more than just a critic; he was an adversary of almost mythical proportions." He was also a Jew. Through the fabric of Chernow's account the theme of anti-Semitism runs like a scarlet thread. It helps explain the division of labor between the self-consciously WASPish investment firms like Morgan's, which dealt in blue-chip government and railroad securities, and those like Goldman, Sachs and Kuhn, Loeb, which had to content themselves with underwriting shares for lowly textile manufacturers and retailers. Anti-Semitism probably contributed to Morgan's refusal in 1930 to rescue the failing Bank of the United States—described by Russell C. Leffingwell as a bank with "a large clientele among our Jewish population of small merchants, and persons of small means and small education, from whom all its management was drawn." Morgan Grenfell in the 1970s adopted a policy of not hiring Jews, so as to avoid irritating its petrich Arab clients.

When Congress passed the landmark Glass-Steagall Act of 1933, a law that would shatter the historic House of Morgan, Leffingwell saw Brandeis's perfidious hand at work. "The Jews do not forget," he advised Thomas Lamont.

"I have little doubt that [Brandeis] inspired it, or even drafted it. . . . I think you underestimate the forces we are antagonizing. . . . I believe that we are confronted with the profound politico-economic philosophy, matured in the wood for twen-

ty years, of the finest brain and the most powerful personality in the Democratic party, who happens to be a Justice of the Supreme Court.

In the last analysis it was not Brandeis's religion but his "politico-economic philosophy" that menaced the House of Morgan. The Glass-Steagall Act enshrined in law the fundamentally Brandeisian precept that commercial banking and investment banking should be utterly separate from each other. Separation was meant to ensure that deposit banks would not be tempted to invest in the dubious offerings of their securities affiliates, and that investment banks, no longer able to draw on their own demand and time deposits for funds, would have to scrutinize new securities issues more carefully, and hustle in the marketplace for the monies with which to underwrite them.

J. P. Morgan and Company, the heart of the intercontinental House of Morgan, had embraced both deposit banking and investment banking until the passage of the Glass-Steagall Act. Now, like other such firms, it had to choose which branch of the business it would retain. Unlike most other firms, it chose commercial banking, and spun off an independent investment bank called Morgan Stanley.

Here Chernow's book, like the financial world it chronicles, loses majesty even as it picks up speed. He dutifully records the merger of J. P. Morgan with Guaranty Trust in 1959, and the dizzying financial pirouettes of Morgan Stanley in the 1970s and 1980s. But there are few heroes here to match the titans who pace his early pages. The old J. P. Morgan and Company had resided in sovereign calm at The Corner, that stately edifice at 23 Wall Street furnished with leather armchairs and rolltop desks. There discreetly attired partners moiled in dignity amid the serene ambience of a British gentlemen's club. In 1973 Morgan Stanley moved to the Exxon Building in the raucous agora of midtown Manhattan; the head of its mergers-and-acquisitions department sported suspenders decorated with dollar bills.

This was a world utterly different from that of the pre-New Deal era, before Glass-Steagall. Yet, as Chernow perceptively argues, its newness owed less to the specific reform policies of

the New Deal than to the evolving nature of the international political system in general, and especially of the financial marketplace itself. In an earlier time governments had been weak and capital had been scarce. Now both national governments and new quasi-governmental transnational bodies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank performed many of the functions, such as guaranteeing the liquidity of the banking system and stabilizing exchange rates, that had once been undertaken by private bankers.

BUT THE "REAL threat to the House of Morgan," Chernow writes, "would come, not from Washington, but from new financial powers beyond the control of the old eastern elite." The world's money markets by the 1970s were awash with capital and with new forms of financial instruments and arrangements virtually unimagined a generation earlier. Corporations, cash-rich, confident, and colossal, severed their traditional relationships with banks and plunged directly into the money markets on their own. "Our principal competition is our clients," a Morgan partner noted in 1978, in a statement that would have floored the first J. P. Morgan, who regarded his clients as supplicants or wards. The old-fashioned deposit-and-loan style of banking in which J. P. Morgan and Company had chosen to remain, in the wake of Glass-Steagall, appeared to be almost a dying business. "Liability management," with its frenetic daily trading in certificates of deposit, federal funds, T-bills, and Eurodollars, began to displace deposits as the principal source of funds with which to finance banking operations. And in the realm of investment banking even greater changes—and dangers—appeared.

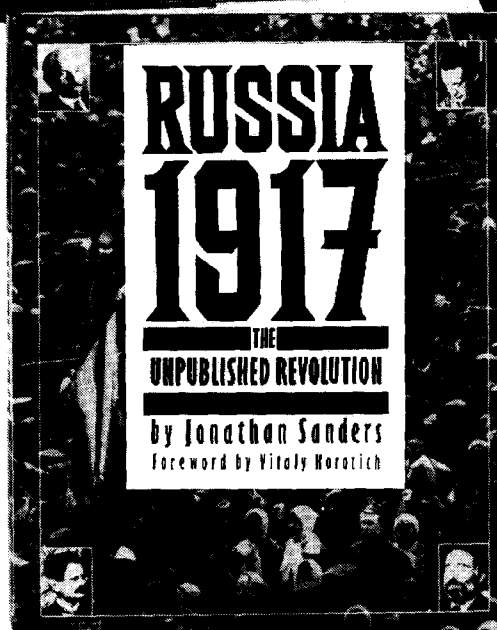
In what Chernow calls the "Baronial Age," which he dates from the mid-1800s until the First World War, vigilant bankers behaved with a fitting parsimony. They conserved the scarce resource of capital by allotting it frugally and personally guarding its subsequent employment. In the succeeding "Diplomatic Age," which Chernow dates from 1913 to 1948, the men of Morgan tried, often in vain, to expand those practices to the international arena.

The modern period Chernow aptly dubs the "Casino Age," and he accuses the investment bankers of being its most reckless plungers. The distinguishing mark of the Casino Age is an abundance of capital and the consequent relaxation of discipline concerning its dispensation. In the Casino Age, he writes, "far from standing guard over scarce resources, bankers would evolve into glad-handing salesmen, almost pushing the bountiful stuff on customers." Apparently—and somewhat mystifyingly, in what remains a genuinely needful world—investment bankers have deemed it most appropriate to push the stuff on customers who wish to buy other customers, especially ones with "clean balance sheets, little debt, and lots of cash." By the mid-1980s Morgan Stanley was annually involved in more than \$50 billion worth of mergers and acquisitions. No longer content to be a mere agent for these behemoth transactions, it began to take equity positions itself in the mergers and buy-outs it sponsored—a practice known as "merchant banking." In a crowning irony, Morgan Stanley made a public offering of its own stock in 1986 to raise more money for these ventures; "it went public," Chernow says, "so it could take other companies private."

In January of this year one merchant-banking transaction went spectacularly sour—the \$400 million in "bridge loans" that First Boston and other investment banks advanced to the Campeau Corporation to buy Federated Department Stores. Freightened with this enormous debt, Campeau was driven to bankruptcy. The Campeau disaster confirms what Chernow perhaps too modestly calls the "underlying fragility" of the modern financial world, and marks the distance that bankers have traveled from the baronial serenity and measured prudence of the Morgans' heyday. By the late 1980s nonfinancial corporate debt stood near the \$2 trillion mark, and some companies were compelled to pay out half of all earnings on debt service. This was a dangerous place for businessmen to be, and the bankers had helped them get there. In "the faithless, rootless world of modern finance," Chernow ominously concludes, "it was hard to see how corporate America could weather a severe recession without unspeakable destruction." □

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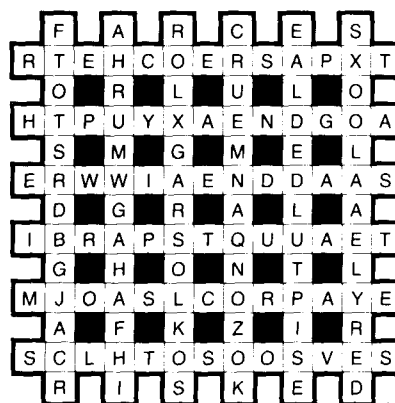


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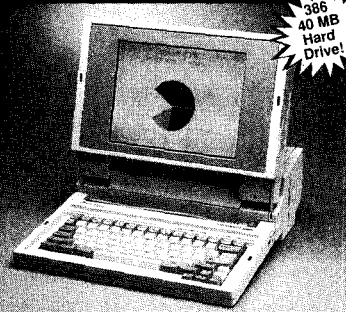


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Brief Reviews



MYSELF AND MARCO POLO by Paul Griffiths. Random House, \$17.95. This book is classified as a novel, but it resembles a series of mental games rather more than even the most avant-garde specimens of that genre. It starts off in the orthodox way, with one Rustichello sharing a prison cell with Marco Polo and proposing to record the great traveler's memoirs. From that point the reader is taken on a tour of Mr. Griffiths's enthusiasms and preoccupations, a mix that incorporates Zen Buddhism, the I Ching, the construction of parables, a dash of opera, and meditations on the nature of knowledge, reality, religion, and identity. There are other topics as well, all presented with great intellectual ingenuity in brilliantly idiosyncratic prose. Time slips from 1289 to 1986. Place is equally shifty. Descriptions are deliberately repeated. All cities lie "shimmering on the plain ahead," and they are approached on a variety of borrowed horses, except when the author has wandered into the twentieth century. The Failed Sage guides his guest to points of interest over the same woodland path regardless of which point of interest is to be visited. Action, of which there is a considerable amount, occurs without apparent motive (barring a couple of seductions—that sort of action requires no motive), and its result is not reported. Readers looking for a plot will be disappointed in this work, but those willing simply to observe the operations of the author's quirky, humorous, provocative imagination will enjoy it.

THE LIVING LEGEND OF SAINT PATRICK by Alannah Hopkin. St. Martin's, \$14.95. Ms. Hopkin, who is an Irish journalist, has undertaken to dissociate Saint Patrick the actual man from the legendary figure surrounded by what she calls "Paddywhackery," meaning a stereotyped view of the Irish which its victims rightly resent. Of the real Patrick, however, very little is known with cer-

tainty. He left two documents that, in later copies to be sure, are considered genuine because "too clumsy. . . to be the work of a forger." Ms. Hopkin deals with the real Patrick very briskly, and proceeds to the more intricate task of tracing the origins of the legends about him and reporting the acrimonious debates of pious scholars and heretical historians. She describes activities at penitential pilgrimage sites, one of which gives the faithful a really sound dose of misery. She ultimately follows the legend to the United States, where the details of its arrival are somewhat surprising. The book contains many amusing touches, and is altogether well written.

YUCATAN by Andrea de Carlo. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$21.95. Mr. de Carlo has considerable personal experience in filmmaking. His novel, which concerns the mishaps befalling some people proposing to make a movie in Mexico, produces the impression that one is watching pieces of a film that was never made because the script was never finished.

DON'T TELL THE GROWN-UPS by Alison Lurie. Little, Brown, \$19.95. Ms. Lurie presents a series of essays on children's books, all centered on the proposition that children prefer books that contradict everything their elders have told them about being good little girls and boys. This will be no news to anyone who recalls being a child, but Ms. Lurie's biographical sketches of the authors of such books are neatly done and broaden the interest of her subject. How, one wonders, could Kate Greenaway have doted on the ancient and dotty Ruskin? How, indeed, could anybody?

FRANZ WERFEL by Peter Stephan Jungk. Grove Weidenfeld, \$22.50. Franz Viktor Werfel (1890–1945) was born in Prague to prosperous Jewish parents who considered themselves more Austrian than

Jewish, although they did see that their son received rabbinical instruction. The rabbi, who had no better success than any other teacher, may have inadvertently inspired Werfel's lifelong interest in, and sympathy for, Christianity. Werfel escaped from school as fast as possible and took to the standard young bohemian life of late hours, café gatherings, literary arguments, and, of course, writing. His poetry soon attracted attention, and his growing reputation eventually attracted Alma Mahler-Gropius, that indefatigable wedder of geniuses. Whatever one may think of Alma—and some of Mr. Jungk's informants thought decidedly ill of her—she stuck with Werfel, fled with him from the Nazis, and kept him busily and successfully at work until his death in Hollywood. Mr. Jungk has had to deal with four cultures—Jewish, Czech, Austro-German, and American—two wars, and numerous distinguished authors. He has also had to set people and events into the context of their complicated times. He has done this with skill and sympathy, producing a book that portrays a living man rather than that assemblage of facts that too often passes for biography.

DRIVING THROUGH CUBA by Carlo Gébler. Simon & Schuster, \$19.95. The author took his pregnant wife and young daughter on a three-month trip to Cuba, a place of which he had read much and knew, on a practical level, nothing at all. He presumably hoped to find material for a good travelogue and certainly hoped to acquire, or at least to locate and admire, a '57 Cadillac Eldorado Brougham. Both these ambitions were thwarted. Bugs, heat, inadequate maps, bad food, wretched accommodations, and the author's slapdash planning make his account a monotony of disasters. Whatever he may be elsewhere, Mr. Gébler is a poor traveling companion in Cuba.

MONTERREY IS OURS! The Mexican War Letters of Lieutenant Dana 1845–1847 edited by Robert H. Ferrell. University Press of Kentucky, \$29.00. Napoleon Jackson Tecumseh Dana, a member of the West Point class of 1842, went off to the Mexican War as a second lieutenant, leaving behind a wife to whom he wrote long letters. His editor admits to cutting about 200,000 words of fam-

ily gossip, discussions arising from the Danas' mutual carelessness with money, and endearments, although enough of the last survive to indicate that the lieutenant was little hampered by Victorian prudery. He was not burdened by nineteenth-century stylistic affectations either. Much of his lucid, observant text reads as if written today. Between descriptions of dusty or muddy marches, the setting up of camps, and the violence of battles, Dana speculated quite cannily on strategy, denounced incompetent seniors, denigrated Mexicans, admired scenery, and lamented the condition of his wardrobe. It appears that uniforms were reserved for parades and funerals. Otherwise Dana wore what came handy. Blue-checked pants made by his "dearest Sue" and a purple shirt were prominent items in his inventory. It is surprising that these remarkable letters have never before been published, but fortunate that they are now available, with Professor Ferrell's admirable footnotes, to devotees of American history.

THE BATHROOM by Jean-Philippe Toussaint. Dutton/Obelisk, \$7.95. The narrator of Mr. Toussaint's slyly satirical novel has taken refuge, for no discernible reason, in the bathroom of the Paris flat that he shares with his mistress. The situation causes problems, but the problems that arise when the young man decides to be bold and goes to Venice are multiple and baffling. Dead ends and missed connections abound. The author parodies diplomatese in "a totally forthright examination of the situation made at the outset of the periodic meeting of our government" and sums up the conversation of Parisian intellectuals with "The woman stuck to Kant and spread butter on her bread." The hero's attempt to find the hotel shower lands him, clad in a towel, in the bar. The foundation of the tale is the impossibility of coping with the minor but lunatic complexities of modern society; its surface is highly entertaining.

THE AWAKENING OF THE SOVIET UNION by Geoffrey Hosking. Harvard University Press, \$32.50 cloth/\$12.95 paper. A portion of this book appeared in the February issue of *The Atlantic*.

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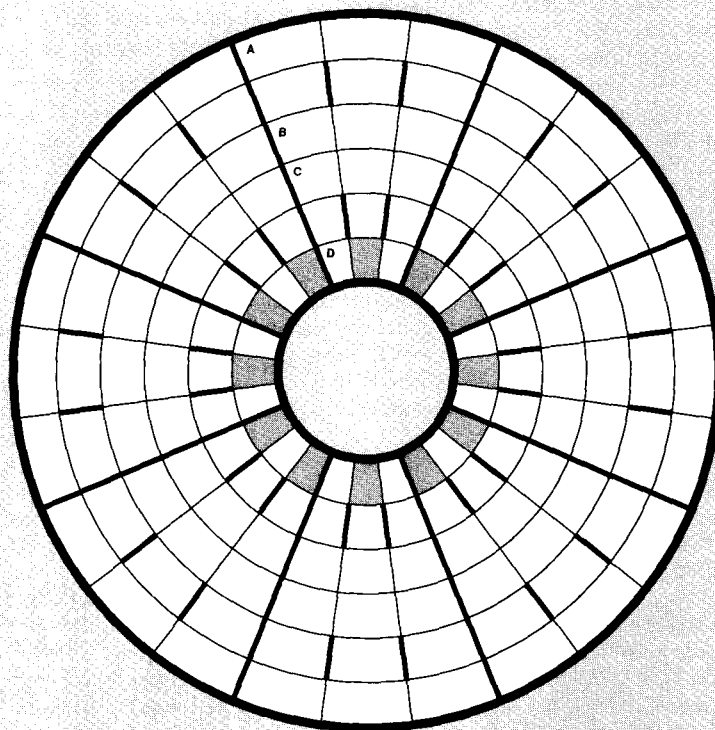
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THE PUZZLER

BY EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON

GETTING AROUND

The circle is divided into eight sectors by heavy lines. Within each sector three 6-letter words should be entered radially, from the outermost ring to the innermost. Each sector's words are clued *in their clockwise order*, but the eight Triplet groups (a.-h.) are clued *in random order*. Meanwhile, Rings A, B, and C will each contain four 6-letter words traveling clockwise, each word beginning at one heavy line, passing through a second, and ending at a third. These four-word sequences are clued *in consecutive order* within each ring, but they don't necessarily begin in the spaces labeled A, B, and C. For the dizzy solver, there is help: The one or two letters in each Triplet group which fall in Ring D's shaded spaces will provide directions for that Triplet's placement in the proper sector. Moreover, Ring D's unshaded letters, starting in the space labeled D and reading clockwise, will spell out a suggested activity for solvers. Answers include nine proper nouns.



The solution to last month's Puzzler appears on page 107.

RINGS

- A.** 1. A camper gets Mr. Gibson around something wonderful
2. Freshly made traces obscured
3. A party following wide midwestern river
4. London's subway—it's said to be cheap (*hyphenated*)
- B.** 1. Stout, gorgeous guy in outskirts of city
2. Speaks fondly about small world
3. Holy Grail finally found after a car's wrecked
4. Swamp turned to a South American capital
- C.** 1. Traveling last, go for revels
2. Greek character on board notices pests
3. In a manner of speaking, do away with vehicle

4. Alien tagged onto Chinese boat trip

TRIPLETS

- a.** 1. Injure person, breaking leg
2. A British permit for seabird
3. Running, clothed in light fabrics
- b.** 1. Hostilities split Polish town
2. Article and report covering a sort of watch
3. Whale product prohibition includes returning fish
- c.** 1. White person out on bail
2. Military ruler and monopolist embraced by local star
3. More expensive charter, according to hearsay
- d.** 1. Help finish off one Italian commune
- 2.** Phantom's possessed, in broadcast
3. Counts out place in Arizona
- e.** 1. "Journey's Beginning" in abstract art on Homeric figure
2. African with a fancy suit
3. Circle compass with color
- f.** 1. Leave bats at cave
2. Selleck, in *Look the Other Way*, overacts
3. Story about idiot girl
- g.** 1. On the way back, deer and young one collapse
2. Belong at this place?
3. Transcribed tune to German
- h.** 1. Horses bearing 1000 Europeans of old
2. Handel opera features one in a secret ceremony
3. While inside, munch nut

NOTE: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 745 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.

WORD WATCH

BY ANNE H. SOUKHANOV

garmento *noun, slang*, a fabric buyer or jobber, or a clothing designer or manufacturer: "They're all real-estate people and *garmentos*," said one long-term Southamptonite after surveying the [party] tent, with pointed reference to the Grand *Garmento* himself, Calvin Klein" (*Newsday*).

BACKGROUND: *Garmento* is, according to an article about New York City's garment district that appeared in the August, 1985, issue of *Smithsonian*, "a term of derision used by Seventh Avenue's more up-to-date folk" for "a lineal descendant of the street peddler who wheels and deals and wheedles his way to a precarious livelihood." *Garmento* is another example of the English language's prolific use of the suffix *-o*, which, when attached to a noun or an adjective, creates a new word, often derogatory. Words so formed include *bucho*, *cheapo*, *freako*, *pinko*, *sicko*, *weirdo*, and *wino*. Other words formed in this way but lacking pejorative connotations and denotations are *boyo*, *daddy-o*, and *kiddo*.

greentapping *noun*, a method of automatically allocating money to any of a group of worthy causes during the course of commercial transactions, especially credit-card transactions: "Greentapping is the act of tapping the economic system for money to improve the world" (*Card Courier: The Newsletter for Practical Idealists*, Working Assets Funding Service).

BACKGROUND: According to Peter Barnes, the president of Working Assets, he and his colleagues searched for "several years" for a word to describe cardholders' allocation of money to causes such as the environment, human rights, world peace, and the eradication of hunger. They came up with *greentapping*. A customer using a telephone credit card might, for instance, allocate one percent of the money

Here are a few of the words being tracked by the editors of The American Heritage Dictionary, published by Houghton Mifflin. A new word that exhibits sustained use may eventually make its way into the dictionary. The information below represents the first stage of research, not the final product.

owed on a bill to a number of causes by signing up for Working Assets Long Distance, which uses the US Sprint system. According to *The Boston Globe*, *greentapping* "goes against a flattening trend in corporate giving, which declined in real dollars last year to \$4.75 billion, or 1.55 percent of pretax profits, its lowest level since 1982."

Saturday school *noun*, a weekend disciplinary program for public-high-school students who misbehave frequently during regular school hours: "For the first infraction, a student can be suspended from school for one day or be assigned to four hours of *Saturday school*" (*Los Angeles Times*). BACKGROUND: *Saturday school*, which has been in existence at least since the early 1980s, is intended as an alternative to suspension. One school official

in Irvine, California, explains: "Kids who ditched school fell farther behind when we suspended them for being truant." Students might be sent to *Saturday school* for any of various infractions, such as tardiness, truancy, smoking, failure to deliver classwork, or creating a disturbance. *Saturday school* can be useful in forcing students to make up missed work, according to proponents. In other cases students undergoing this weekend detention are required to clean school grounds.

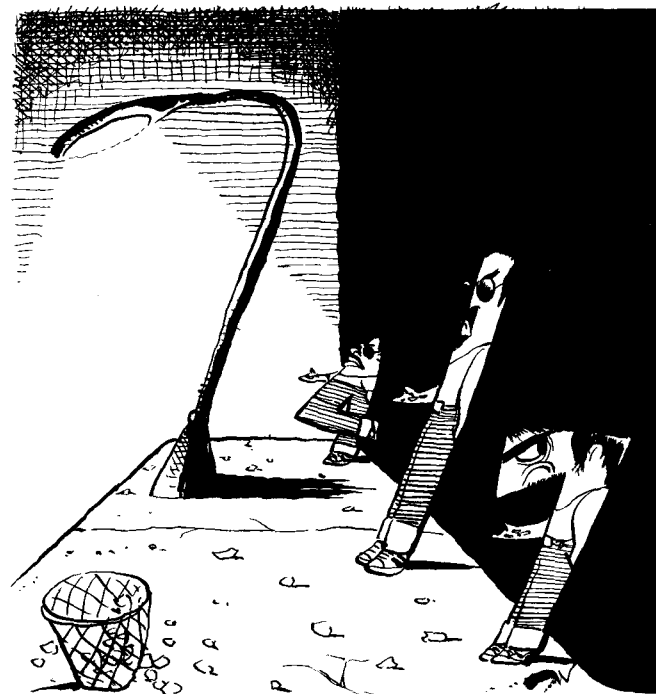
token sucker *noun*, a subway-token thief who jams the recesses of a turnstile token slot with paper and then uses his mouth and teeth to retrieve tokens embedded there by passengers: "Known in the parlance as *trolls* and *token suckers* . . . [the thieves] have continued to victimize the [New

York] Transit Authority, its 2,897 turnstiles and its riders" (*The New York Times*).

BACKGROUND: In a typical week (July 17–July 23, 1989) the New York Transit Authority responded to 1,779 calls to repair inoperative turnstiles, most of them disabled by *token suckers*. "Token sucking," in which the guy literally retrieves the token using his mouth, appears to be the most common form of token theft, said a transit police spokesman, according to the *Times*. In a procedure first identified in 1983, the *token sucker* jams the slot and then steps aside to await a passenger. When the turnstile jams and the passenger, unable to get the token in or out, seeks assistance from a clerk, the *token sucker* makes his move. Another retrieval technique—this one employed by "a more fastidious strain of *token sucker*"—is to use a plastic coffee stirrer tipped with bubble gum.

24/7 *adjective and adverb, slang*, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Used of illicit drugs, specifically crack cocaine: "On every block there are four or five different 'crews,' or gangs, each touting its own brand of the drug, known to aficionados as 'Scotty' (as in 'Beam me up'). Some blocks are 'hotter' than others, depending on the availability of the crack. On the hottest blocks Scotty is available '24/7'" (*The New York Times Magazine*).

BACKGROUND: This street term—numerals functioning grammatically as two parts of speech—exemplifies a class of English words, usually informal or slang, that are wholly or partly numerals. Others are 10-4 (the term meaning "message received"), 4 × 4 or 4 by (the vehicle), 220 and 440 (the track-and-field events), 1040 (tax form), 20-20 (of vision), 86 (to eject a patron, as from a bar), 10 (a beautiful woman), 3D (the movie technology), and 212 (a New Yorker).



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